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What is drought?

Drought is the result of **anticipated natural precipitation reduction** over an extended period of time, usually a season or more in length. It is regarded as a **normal phenomenon that occurs in all climatic regions**, including regions with high average rainfall.

It can have drastic and long-term effects

Droughts are one of the most complex of all-natural hazards, as it is difficult to determine when it begins and when it ends. Drought has a large impact on farming; it can affect cropping, grazing land, edible plants and even trees.

One of the major hazards to drought is wildfire, this arises when dry grass is exposed to intense heat, causing an ignition of this biomass (Wayne, 1965).

How to prepare and survive even to the worst drought?

1. Observing early warnings by meteorologists

Farmers can approach meteorologists (scientists that deal with climate predictions) to **understand local and global weather patterns** better to do weather forecasting.

Farmers can also **set up instruments on the farm to monitor rainfall and temperature changes**, this will assist in predicting and avoiding

the effects of drought (Wayne, 1965).

2. Reduce livestock

Farmers should **reduce the number of livestock on their farm**, this will assist in reducing grazing pressure on the [rangeland](#), this approach will also **promote available and abundant feed supply**, giving farmers an opportunity to prepare other drought-management measures. During this process, it is ideal to get rid of young stock, animals close to marketable condition, castrated animals and old aging animals (also known as fillers) (Rothauge, 2001).

3. Accumulating financial reserves

At this stage, income obtained from the emergency sale of “filler” animals. In anticipation of a drought, this emergency money can be utilized for other drought management measures such as buying feed for the drought.

4. Building a fodder bank

A fodder bank is an **accumulation of feed that will be used as emergency feed in times of natural grazing is scarce**. The idea is to preserve feed to utilize during harsh times.

5. Drought-resistant fodder crops

This approach looks at growing cheap and drought resistant fodder crops that can be harvested and stored for later use.

6. Store water

Use **water conservation practices** that help you lose less water and encourage infiltration of water into the soil.

7. Supplemental feedstocks

If the drought persists, **consider the prices of supplemental feedstocks** that could stretch the available forage in the pasture.

8. Residues

In extreme drought conditions, **by-products not usually fed to livestock and failed crops that were intended to be harvested can be used as feed**. It is crucial that farmers and producers understand the use of the feed and whether it may have been exposed to chemicals.

Conclusion

Drought is a serious concern for farmers, as it affects the production process. There are ways of surviving through drought events and ensuring less loss of livestock and less damage on the grazing lands.

Reference

Rothauge, A. X. E. L. (2001). Drought Management Strategies for Namibian Ranchers. *AGRICOLA, Windhoek*, 91-105.

Wayne, C. P. (1965). Meteorological drought. *Res. Pap*, 45, 58.

[DROUGHT MANAGEMENT IN NAMIBIA](#): Part I: Introduction, AXEL

8 tips to prepare and survive drought

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