

**Livestock Guardian Dogs
Facility Recommendations for
Paradise Farm**

Purpose: To protect the animals, people, and facility structures on the 30 acres of Paradise Farm from pest and predation, and, specifically, from bear damage.

Situation (as described on Saturday, April 15, 2017): A 30-acre mixed use farm with a parking lot, regular public and private events, volunteer people coming and going five days a week, goats and chickens in permanent residence, but no one necessarily living on-site or staying overnight.

Proposed predator control and bear deterrence: Two (2) Livestock Guardian Dogs to live on-site 24/7

Facility Recommendations to accommodate two (2) Livestock Guardian Dogs (LGDs) living on-site 24/7:

- A **dog-tight** perimeter fence = will be satisfied by whatever fencing is chosen to deter bears
 - Dog-tight = minimum of 4' livestock fencing topped by two (2) electric wires at 56-58" and 66-72".
 - No "step-ladder" crossbars on the inside of the fencing
- A **dog-tight** Main entry gate
 - No more than 4" off the ground at any point along the gate
 - No vertical gaps at either end of the gate wider than 4-5"
 - 5' (60") tall, with something other than a smooth top rail, to discourage it being used as a springboard
 - Gate mesh no larger than 5"x7"
 - A 50" livestock mesh gate is adequate **WITH** a stretched or coiled electric wire above it, spanning the driveway.
- A second "air-lock" gate within the primary Main gate which can be closed to permit a vehicle to drive in the Main Gate and close the Main Gate behind the vehicle, before opening the inner gate and driving into the farm or parking area. (See recommendations below for LGD management. This two-gate "air-lock" procedure would only need to be executed by the first vehicle arriving and the last vehicle leaving, or by any vehicle coming to the farm singly.)
- A dog-tight fence and gate surrounding the livestock portion of the farm. The existing 5' (60") tight-knot no-climb fence is sufficient. (The LGDs will keep the bears out of that area.) A 50"x 4' mesh-filled man-gate into the livestock area so that the vehicle-accessible gate does not need to be opened to do animal chores (~\$55-65.00)
- A **jump-gate** to allow the LGDs to move in and out of the livestock area, but prevent the goats, sheep, or other livestock from getting out. [Image is an example; there are other ways to effect the same outcome.] Cost TBD.
- A 50"x 10-12' mesh-filled livestock gate into the livestock area, for trailer-(un)loading (~\$90.00)



**\$90.00 for
2nd driveway
gate**



Livestock Guardian Dog Management Recommendations:

Livestock Guardian Dog Selection –

- Start with LGDs that are at least 11-14 months old, and have
 - Had behavior training (“load up” into a vehicle, “come through” a gate, stay “off” of people, “NO playing” with the stock, walk politely on a leash, “stand” for an exam)
 - Have demonstrated trustworthy behavior around stock
 - Have demonstrated polite, confident behavior around people
 - Have demonstrated confident, definite aggression towards both large & flying predators
- **Two (2)** Livestock Guardian Dogs, male and female, are sufficient to guard 30 acres from a persistent bear, provided there is a good fence.
- **The LGDs** ideally would be purchased or acquired as “finished” workdogs, 14-24 months old
- The LGDs must not be two females (females always fight), and, preferably, opposite sex
- The LGDs should not be siblings
- It would be best if they were different ages (then they will not become geriatric at the same time, and can be replaced one at a time, never leaving the Farm without an experienced LGD).
- LGDs would both be neutered to simplify management (around 18 months of age)
- I suggest Paradise Farm purchase the dogs/puppies now from a breeder/rancher and have them raised/trained for the Farm over the next 10-12 months, so that the dogs are ready to be introduced and work when the Farm is ready to be protected.

LGD Management –

- LGDs are independent-thinking dogs who instinctually make their own judgement calls and assessments of situations, and are bred to take action on those assessments.
- To minimize visitor/LGD interactions and prevent LGDs from slipping out the Main Gate when vehicles arrive, I recommend the following set-up, or something similar:
 - The LGDs be confined to the livestock area when people or vehicles are coming and going.
 - The first person arriving to the Farm leads the LGDs into the Livestock Area and feeds the dogs in the Livestock Area and closes the jump-gate, confining the LGDs to the livestock area during the day.
 - The last person leaving the Farm opens the jump-gate, giving the LDGs access to the entire 30 acres (or as much area as the Farm enterprise would like kept free from bears and pests).
- To keep the LGDs from accidentally being freed out the main gate, an “airlock” system of two gates is ideal.
 - The inner gate does not need to be bear-proof or over 4’ high.
 - The distance between the Main Gate and the inner gate is the length of the longest vehicle/trailer combination that might need to be accommodated, plus the length of the Main Gate, allowing it to swing open and back closed.

The inner gate, as well as the Main Gate, is left closed when the last person leaves. The first person arriving enters the Main Gate, and closes the Main Gate behind their vehicle. They then open the inner gate and drive through, leaving the Main Gate closed. They then either feed the dogs and confine them to the Livestock Area, and open the Main Gate, or leave the Main Gate and inner gate closed. When the last person leaves, they close the inner gate behind their car, before opening the Main Gate. (The next-to-last person can close the Main Gate behind them, simplifying the departure procedure.)

- LGDs are fed just once daily, and can self-feed using portion-bagged feed in some weather-proof container. Since goats and chickens love dogfood, the container and portion bags need to be goat-proof. (I use quart Ziploc bags and store them in weather-proof totes.) **\$60.00 per month for dog food**
- A raw diet is equally healthy for LGDs, but is more difficult to manage in a self-feeding system.
- **Each LGD needs its own feeding station/locale, separated by a distance of about 20 feet.**
- A 100-120 lb LGD eats about 4 cups of dogfood per day. A 40-lb bag of dog food delivers 31 4-cup portions. Costco carries an excellent premium Lamb & Rice dogfood (Kirkland branded, made by Diamond Feeds) for \$30/bag. So, two LGDs will cost \$60.00/month in dog food.
- **Breed recommendations:** Short-coated eastern LGDs – Anatolian Shepherd Dogs (ASDs), Kangal Dogs (KDs), or Central Asian Shepherds (CAS), and specifically **Kangal Dogs**.
 - **Rationale:**
 - Bears are a significant threat.
 - The eastern origin LGDs are recognized as being more confident and more effective against apex predators.
 - The shorter-coated LGDs are easier care and tidier in appearance than the longer, fluffier LGDs.
 - Three of our native weeds are burdocks, thistles, and blackberries.
 - The shorter-coated LGDs are known for being more attentive to aerial predators
 - These three breeds are most known for being people-friendly
 - Kangal Dogs are more accommodating of people strangers than other two breeds
 - Kangal Dogs are handsome and have a consistent, recognizable “look”
- **Health Maintenance:**
 - Livestock Guardian Dogs that live outside almost never have fleas. Ticks are occasionally a concern in other climates, but their coats are so dense that for PNW ticks are almost unknown. **\$200.00 per year for health check & vaccs**
 - Vaccinations – Initially, and then Canine Rabies and DHPP every three years.
 - LGDs “blow their coats” and do not need brushing, and never need bathing.
 - An active LGD wears down its toenails and does not need them trimmed.
 - Bones brought from home tables are sufficient to keep their teeth in beautiful condition

Offer of training: At Hidden Meadow Ranch I have two pairs of adult LGDs: two Kangal Dogs and two Anatolian Shepherd Dogs. If you cannot find a breeder(s) that is willing to train or sell you two “finished” LGDs, I am willing put a puppy (or two) in with my LGDs and oversee its/their training and mentorship for the 8-12 months until the Farm is ready for their LGDs.

Please feel welcome to contact me with any questions.

Best wishes,

Laura Faley
 Hidden Meadow Ranch
 (360) 202-5023
 Laura@HiddenMeadowRanch.com