

ONA REPORTS

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Campaign for Ona

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"Campaign for Ona" The Range Cattle Research and Education Center (REC) is dedicated to the enhancement of the livestock, forages, and natural resources associated with Florida's grazing landscapes. Located in South Florida, the heart of Florida's grazing lands, we reside adjacent to nearly 80 percent of Florida's one million beef cows. Our field laboratory resources are unique, with approximately 1,300 beef cows and calves and 2,900 acres of native and developed pastures. Founded in 1941 through the efforts of legislatures, cattlemen, and citizens, the Range Cattle REC has enjoyed a strong partnership among private land owners and ranchers in central and southern Florida. Although many changes in our production practices and land management uses have occurred through these years, it has always been our commitment to align our research and education efforts with the current issues impacting our clientele. It is through this partnership that our Center has grown in prominence throughout the United States as a leading source of practical, science-based information focused on range and grazing lands research.

The importance of private funding continues to grow as a major contributor to the support of our Center's annual operations. As part of the University-wide comprehensive campaign - Florida Tomorrow Campaign; we are embarking on our Center's private funding campaign. We view the "Campaign for Ona" as a critical component of our Center's future. Our goal is to generate \$1.5 million in private endowments focused and dedicated to the continued success of our Center's research and education programs. These privately funded endowments may be used to support the "Director's Excellence Endowment Fund" or may be designated by the donor to established an individually named "Endowment Fund" targeted toward a donor-specified research and education program. Successful achievement of our endowment goal will be supported by the Florida Matching Gift Program, which will provide a 50% match toward endowments

totaling \$100,000 in private contributions. To date, we have achieved \$380,000 in endowments - 25% of our goal. Once our final goal is reached, our endowment pool will generate approximately \$60,000 annually. These spendable earnings will increase as interest continues to be applied toward the principle protecting against the diminishing impacts of inflation. The endowments remain at the Center in perpetuity to support research and education priorities of our future generations.

Recently we hosted a stakeholder luncheon in Okeechobee as an initial effort to introduce the "Campaign for Ona". At this luncheon, three stakeholders provided personal commentary on why they decided to establish an endowment gift to the Range Cattle REC. In the coming months, we will continue to keep you updated on our campaign progress and further introduce these individual endowment gifts. On April 16, 2009 we will be hosting a Field Day and Ribbon Cutting at the Range Cattle REC in Ona. On this special day we will be honoring the individuals and families that have participated in this important campaign. Please place this date in your calendar and plan to join us for this event. If you have any questions regarding the "Campaign for Ona" or would like to be provided more information, please contact us by phone (863-735-1314) or E-mail: mjarth@ufl.edu.