

## LGD Best Management Practices (BMP's)

### Pups

- Select pups from known LGD [breeds](#).
- Select pups from breeds better suited to your environment and working conditions.
- Select pups from working parents.
- Select pups from healthy parents making sure the pups are disease free.
- Select pups from breeders with guarantees and/or health tests.
- Select pups from breeders who offer support through the process of raising a pup.
- Select pups that have been in contact with the same type of livestock you own from birth.

### Bonding/Training

- Pups should be in a [bonding pen](#) by 8 weeks of age to start the bonding process.
- Use bonding pens until pups are 6 months old.
- Start with smaller pens and gradually increase the size as pups mature.
- Start with 4-5 head of livestock in a bonding pen and gradually increase the amount and ages as pups mature.
- Rotate stock in bonding pens regularly.
- Pups should have safe space in the bonding pen to eat and lay down.
- Make the bonding pen escape proof. This teaches the pup to [respect fences](#).
- Bond single pups with stock, when possible, vs pairs of pups.
- Regularly observe pups in bonding pens from a distance.
- Use the same type of [feeding system](#) in the bonding pen that you intend to use with the adult dog in the pasture.
- Bond to multiple species if you have multiple species.
- [Socialization](#) while in the bonding pen should allow you to:
- Teach the dog basic commands of no, come, sit or stay.
- Dogs should be easily caught in the field.
- Dogs should be [leash broke](#), [tether trained](#) and trained to [ride in vehicles](#).

### Adolescent Dogs

- Monitor pups regularly until 18 months of age.
- Monitor pups carefully when introducing to lambing/kidding livestock and during breeding season.
- Monitor pups with any new additions to the herd/flock.
- Place LGD bonded pups with adult LGD to “mentor” the pup.
- Using [GPS Trackers](#) on pups can help you keep track of them until they mature.
- [Methods](#) such as yokes, dangle sticks, drags or shock collars can help stop unwanted behaviors.

### Health

- Have your pup examined by a licensed DVM within a few days of bringing them to your ranch.
- Provide annual rabies and DHLPP [vaccinations](#) along with de-wormers for dogs.

- Spay and neuter all LGDs by 12 months of age.
- [Flea & tick control](#) products are necessary to keep dogs healthy and productive.
- Feed [dog food](#) with animal protein as the first ingredient with a protein level of 22-28% and a fat level of 18-20%.
- Longer haired dogs require grooming. All matted hair should be removed before season changes.

#### Misc.

- ID chip all LGDs and update online information to prove ownership.
- Use [positive reinforcement](#) such as treats when dogs are seen with livestock in the field.
- Use [feeding stations](#) to keep livestock out of LGD feed.
- Immediately return any roaming dogs to the proper pasture location.
- Keep your breeder informed of any problems that may arise with the pup.
- Notify the breeder if for any reason you are unable to keep your LGD.