KISS THE GROUND FARMER GRANT ‘25-’26

Kokes Cattle Company
CROOK, COLORADO

The Plan

Levi Kokes set out to integrate livestock into the crop rotations on his family’s 8,300-acre ranch in northeastern Colorado. His plan: install two new water wells to make grazing possible on dryland fields that previously lacked reliable water access. By bringing cattle into the cropping system, he hoped to build healthier soil, reduce reliance on synthetic inputs, and create a more resilient operation in a drought-prone landscape.

Challenges & Learnings

In Colorado’s dry climate, limited water access made it difficult to bring cattle onto cropland while drought placed additional pressure on the ranch’s native grasslands. Levi learned that improving water infrastructure could do more than expand grazing opportunities. It could give other parts of the ranch valuable time to rest and recover.

Adaptations

With new water infrastructure and virtual fencing, Levi can now move cattle through dryland crop fields that were previously inaccessible for grazing. This added flexibility allows him to make better use of available forage while giving native rangeland more time to recover, especially during drought.

Community Impact

Kokes Cattle Company is helping other producers see regenerative agriculture in action! Levi has welcomed college students, industry groups, and local NRCS representatives to the ranch, sharing practical lessons in soil health and dryland grazing. He hopes to continue expanding these educational opportunities.

Results

With support from Kiss the Ground, new water infrastructure is allowing Levi to integrate livestock into dryland crop rotations across his 8,300-acre operation. Combined with virtual fencing, these improvements have opened new grazing opportunities, supported soil health and water cycling, and allowed native rangeland to recover during drought. The project is helping build greater flexibility and resilience across the ranch.

BIGGEST IMPACT

DROUGHT RESILIENCE



> “It’s also allowed us to give recovery and rest to our native rangeland, which has been critical during these times of drought that we’ve had recently.”
>
> – LEVI KOKES
> KOKES CATTLE COMPANY