



# SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT

## Nutritional Properties of Windrowed and Standing Basin Wildrye

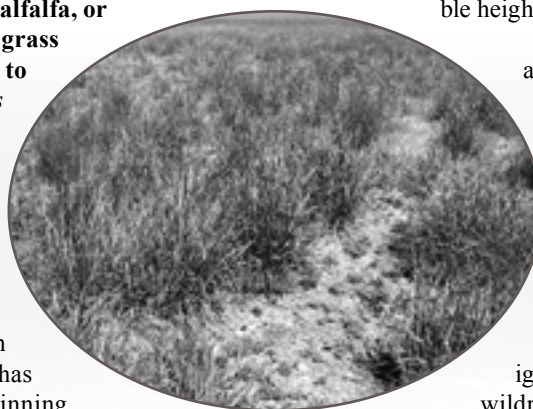
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**T**his past week I received a call from a rancher near Austin, NV who was looking for an economical, high producing forage that could be used as a winter forage in his beef cattle production system. Although there are many alternative forages and small grains that can be rotated with alfalfa, or used in pastures such as: Teff, Wheat, Barley and traditional grass hays. A forage that is sometimes over looked, but common to Nevada and the Intermountain West is Basin wildrye (*Elymus cinereus*).

Resent on farm research conducted at the University of Nevada Reno's Gund Ranch, compared principle nutrient/mineral content of June cut, windrowed and free-standing basin wildrye; and assessed the effect of managed fire on basin wildrye standing crop.

Basin wildrye can produce a large amount of forage and can be found on many different ecological sites within the 8 to 20 inch precipitation zone. Basin wildrye is a very tall, robust grass that has been used for winter grazing since early settlement times. Beginning with settlement in the 1860s, basin wildrye was recognized as a superior winter forage that was abundant on vast areas of intermountain basins within the larger Great Basin. Today, many of these areas are entirely shrub dominated with only remnant stands of this once abundant native grass.

The species is also characterized with elevated meristematic growing points, and because of this feature, spring and early summer grazing as well as mowing is not recommended since both can remove and reduce the number of growing points causing a decline in plant vigor and survival. However, when used as late summer, fall, or winter forage, growing point concerns become less of an issue when the plants become dormant. Traditional methods of mechanical harvest also tend to remove the elevated growing points, but when mechanical harvesters are adjusted so that cutting bars are elevated mostly above growing points, this problem is effectively eliminated. Leaving more residual stubble height also reduces smothering problems for plants under the windrow.



Protein content fluctuates dramatically with season ranging from a peak of about 20% in early summer to 7% in winter. Like many grass forages, basin wildrye should have greater nutritional value if it is cut near the growing season peak and windrowed as stockpiled forage to be subsequently grazed later in the year. Because of relatively low nutrient value and palatability (coarse, woolly stems) if left standing after the growing season, it has lost favor as a standing stockpile of forage and ignored by many ranchers as a potential forage source.

Basin wildrye characteristically responds with significantly higher forage production after prescribed burning or wildfire fire ignitions. This presents the prospect of significantly increasing Basin wildrye forage production by using prescribed fire as a tool.

The implications of this study were- Forage production was increased by prescribed burning. The quality of the windrowed forage was well above the standing crop version. Windrowing Basin wildrye provides an opportunity for improved access to quality forage in fall and winter. Increased production combined with the advantages of windrowing will provide ranchers with additional winter feed options without requiring a great deal of new input capital. However, work remains to determine actual cost effectiveness and if repeated mowing will cause any long-term decline to the basin wildrye.

Source: Nutritional Properties of Windrowed and Standing Basin Wildrye over Time, B. Bruce<sup>1,5</sup> PAS, B. Perryman<sup>2</sup>, T. Shenkoru<sup>2</sup>, K. Conley<sup>3</sup>, and J. Wilker<sup>4</sup>

The Society for Range Management (SRM) is "the professional society dedicated to supporting persons who work with rangelands and have a commitment to their sustainable use." SRM's members are ranchers, land managers, scientists, educators, students, conservationists – a diverse membership guided by a professional code of ethics and unified by a strong land ethic. This series of articles is dedicated to connecting the science of range management with the art, by applied science on the ground in Nevada. Articles are the opinion of the author and may not be an official position of SRM. Further information and a link to submit suggestions or questions are available at the Nevada Section website at <http://www.ag.unr.edu/nsrm/>. SRM's main webpage is [www.rangelands.org](http://www.rangelands.org). We welcome your comments.



## 20 Tips for a Positive New Year

by Jon Gordon

1. Stay Positive. You can listen to the cynics and doubters and believe that success is impossible or you can trust that with faith and an optimistic attitude all things are possible.
2. Take a morning walk of gratitude. I call it a "Thank You Walk." It will create a fertile mind ready for success.
3. Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a college kid with a maxed out charge card.
4. Zoom Focus. Each day when you wake up in the morning ask, "What are the three most important things I need to do today that will help me create the success I desire?" Then tune out all the distractions and focus on these actions.
5. Instead of being disappointed about where you are, think optimistically about where you are going.
6. Remember that adversity is not a dead-end but a detour to a better outcome.
7. Don't chase success. Instead decide to make a difference and success will find you.
8. Get more sleep. You can't replace sleep with a double latte.
9. Don't waste your precious energy on gossip, energy vampires, issues of the past, negative thoughts or things you cannot control. Instead invest your energy in the positive present moment.
10. Mentor someone and be mentored by someone.
11. Live with the 3 E's: Energy, Enthusiasm and Empathy.
12. Remember there's no substitute for hard work.
13. Believe that everything happens for a reason and expect good things to come out of challenging experiences.
14. Implement the "No Complaining Rule." After complaining you feel better, but everyone around you feels sick.
15. Read more books than you did in 2012.
16. Don't seek happiness. Instead decide to live with passion and purpose and happiness will find you.
17. Focus on "Get to" vs. "Have to." Each day focus on what you get to do, not what you have to do. Life is a gift not an obligation.
18. Each night before you go to bed complete the following statements: I am thankful for \_\_\_\_\_. Today I accomplished\_\_\_\_\_.
19. Smile and laugh more. They are natural anti-depressants.
20. Enjoy the ride. You only have one ride through life so make the most of it and enjoy it.

