

A CHALLENGE TO STOCKMEN AND RANGE OFFICIALS

Presidential Address—Fourth Annual Meeting American Society of Range Management Billings, Montana, January 23-25, 1951

D. A. SAVAGE

Superintendent, U. S. Southern Great Plains Field Station, Bureau of Plant Industry,
Woodward, Oklahoma

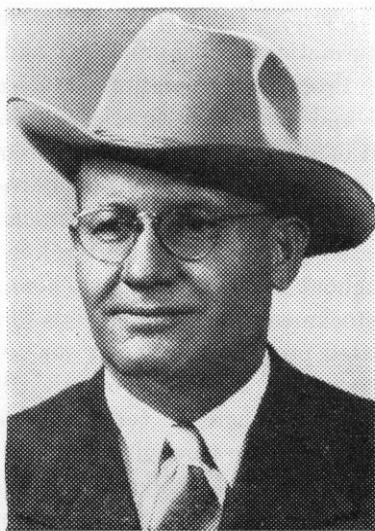
MUCH as I enjoyed my recent range study mission to the splendid progressive, democratic little country of Uruguay, it is a distinct pleasure to return to old USA. It is also a rare privilege and signal honor to preside at the Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Society of Range Management here at Billings in my home county of Yellowstone and home state of Montana. It is altogether fitting and proper that our Society should meet here. Montana leads all states in Society membership. Two of the first three presidents of the Society and the next elected one are Montanans. Active interest in range improvement displayed by expansion of Range Society interests in Montana is highly commendable and represents a laudable goal to which other states and areas should strive.

Our Society is composed of leading range officials and stockmen throughout the United States, Canada, Alaska, and several foreign countries. It was founded three years ago as a medium by which its members could work effectively and harmoniously together in improving all phases of the range livestock industry. Our Society fills a critical need not provided by any other splendid organization to which officials and stockmen belong.

Our Society has increased from 1,400 members a year ago to about 2,000 at the

present time. The high ideals, practical aims, and feasible accomplishments of an organization of this kind demand extensive expansion, with increased participation at the working level of stockmen and stock farmers. Every stockman and range official in the Americas would gain much by active participation in our Society work and objectives. It is imperative that current members make this fact known to non-members.

All officers, committeemen, and local sections have been extremely active during the year. A total of 200 members have



D. A. SAVAGE

worked diligently on 31 committees in advancing Society objectives. The Journal of Range Management has made notable strides. It has limited its publication to articles, editorials, and news items of immense interest and practical value to range officials and stockmen everywhere. Plans have been perfected to increase this valuable service from four to six issues in 1951.

Local sections have increased from seven to thirteen during the year, with additional groups now in process of formation. These local organizations, composed of leading stockmen and officials within a given area, constitute the most important single segment of our Society. They, the backbone of our organization, represent the most effective means by which our highly commendable objectives may be translated into positive, realistic local action.

Many of the local sections have been extremely active during the year. Others are just getting under way. Considerable progress has been made in accomplishing range improvement through frequent local meetings, range trips, and exchange of information among stockmen and officials. Proper consideration of scientific facts and practical experience provide sound bases for local range improvement.

Much has been accomplished in respect to range and pasture improvement and increased production of better livestock throughout America. I strongly commend you stockmen and range officials for this indicated progress. However, our accomplishments to date have only scratched the surface. There is very much more that can be done through individual and collective effort. I challenge and charge every one of you to give this all-important problem your immediate and continuous attention.

We are now faced with the gravest emergency in the history of the World. Mobilization for defense, preparation for the possibility of a global war, and rapid recovery thereafter demand the production of more and better livestock products.

Complete application of currently available information on range and pasture management and improvement could easily double grazing returns in America. Increases of even greater magnitude would be possible through further and more comprehensive research on all phases of range and pasture improvement and plant development. The importance of the range livestock industry to the economy and stability of America demands a complete program of research, demonstration, and extension on range forage plants comparable with that now applied to cultivated crops.

In the meantime let us take full advantage of existing information and accomplish the maximum of possible improvement necessary in mobilizing for continental defense and security. I strongly urge the Local Sections to take the lead in this major effort, giving due consideration to all of the following list of range improvement practices that may apply to a given set of local conditions:

1. Proper stocking as to kind and number of livestock
2. Distribution and season of grazing
3. Subdivision and deferred grazing
4. Herding
5. Water supply
6. Salt and minerals
7. Seeding
8. Fertilizing
9. Mowing
10. Spraying for weed and brush control
11. Burning
12. Water conservation

13. Supplemental feeds (concentrates, hay, silage, bundle feed)

14. Renovation and other mechanical treatment

15. Shade and shelter

16. Control of diseases and parasites

17. Livestock breeding and improvement

The American Society of Range Management fully endorses a program for improvement of the Nation's grasslands recently adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. This is right down the alley of our organization. It represents a highly constructive movement long overdue in America. It constitutes the bases for balanced livestock farming, sustained abundance, and good nutrition. A concerted program for grassland betterment in America represents an ideal opportunity to serve and support the Nation's mobilization.

The ten-point program adopted by the Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant Colleges and Universities is timely and worthy of quotation here:

1. Cooperate with farmers in fitting grasses, legumes, and livestock in their plans for balanced, profitable farming.

2. Encourage the wise use of lime, fertilizers, and farm manures in line with local soil requirements, future cropping needs, and ascertained research results.

3. Grow more high quality forage by renovating pastures, reseeding pastures, hay land, and range with legumes and grasses in proper mixture, adopting improved rotations based on desirable legumes and grasses, planting cover crops, and converting suitable idle land to grass of good character.

4. Employ modern and scientific

practices of proven quality in the development and management of livestock herds and the pastures and ranges on which they graze.

5. Provide and conserve water for livestock and forage production by installing stockwater ponds, wells, waterspreaders, contour furrows, terraces, irrigation systems, and similar improvements.

6. Control weeds, brush, insect pests, and livestock parasites and diseases.

7. Furnish farmers the best scientific information on harvesting and storing forage, as hay or silage, so as to conserve maximum feed and maintain nutritional quality.

8. Assure adequate stocks of adapted legume and grass seeds and encourage their best utilization through efficient methods of production, harvesting, storing, distributing, and planting them in good seedbeds.

9. Reduce farm costs and raise net income by employing suitable combinations of grasslands and livestock improvement practices in balanced farm plans.

10. Make available to farmers and ranchers the appropriate financial aid in the form of credit and conservation payments and encourage leasing arrangements which will make improvements profitable for both tenants and landlords.

These steps towards grassland improvement are clearly in line with the major objectives of our Society. They and the main purposes of our organization are highly commendable and eminently worthwhile. However, none of these broad objectives can be accomplished without the wholehearted cooperation, support, and concerted action of stockmen and officials throughout America.

United effort in this broad program

can be fostered, encouraged, and developed through concrete and tangible action by Local Sections of the American Society of Range Management. It behooves every unit of our organization to develop and carry out a positive program for accelerated improvement of local range and pasture conditions. This requires more sectional meetings, field trips, publicity, demonstrations, extension, research, child and adult education, and related activities. Aggressive steps

must be taken to guide local, regional, and national policies, developments, and legislation for the continued improvement of agriculture. Greatly increased expansion of Society membership will unquestionably occur as a natural outgrowth of these developments.

Other retiring officers join with me in pledging our continued support to the future development of the American Society of Range Management and its highly commendable objectives.



LISTENING

Blessed are they who have nothing to say, and who cannot be persuaded to say it.
—James Russell Lowell.



It is a great misfortune neither to have enough wit to talk well nor enough judgment to be silent.—Jean de la Bruyère.



A good listener is not only popular everywhere, but after a while he knows something.—Wilson Mizner.