



Forage Quality and Production of Lehmann Lovegrass (*Eragrostis Lehmanniana*) in Invaded Rangelands of Central Chihuahua, Mexico

Alfonso Sánchez-Muñoz¹, Karen R. Hickman² and Daren Redfearn²; (1) Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua, (2) Oklahoma State University; Contact Author Email: asanche@uach.mx

Throughout rangelands of the central valley of Chihuahua, Lehmann lovegrass (LL) invasion and subsequent dominance in native rangeland have been controversial; ecologists concerned LL will continue to displace native perennial grass species, and some ranchers object to the low palatability of this forage compared to native species. Some producers with LL dominated rangelands consider LL as useful forage for livestock. Given the economic limitations of ranches within this area range managers want information about forage quality of LL and information on the potential of this grass as adequate forage in their invaded rangelands. Forage quality and production were determined for invasive grass LL in 4 rangeland sites: El Pastor, La Campana, San Cristobal, and San Judas in 2004 and 2005. Six 1m² plots were randomly clipped at full growing stage in each location and year. LL forage quality and yield were significantly different among both years and sites ($P < 0.05$). Precipitation at La Campana showed that year 2004 was above long term average (382mm) and 2005 was below. Crude protein ranged from 5 to 6.5% among sites with only La Campana (2004) showing higher CP. ADF values ranged from 46 to 53% among sites and years. NDF value ranged from 74 to 78% among sites and years. In vitro true dry matter digestibility ranged from 48 to 62%. LL forage quality expressed as TDN was below average quality value for common forages. Forage quality within areas dominated by LL would not be adequate in the Central Plains of Chihuahua rangelands.

2009. 62nd Society for Range Management Annual Meeting. Paper No. 70-8.