

# Near East Leader Tour Studies Range Waterspreading and Management in Western States

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**A**N EVENT of considerable interest to our workers in range management was the Near East Leader Tour through some of the

western range states during the period September 28 to December 19, 1953. Under sponsorship of the Foreign Operations Administration,

twenty-three agricultural leaders from Near Eastern countries were selected and brought to this country to study range management methods and range improvement techniques which have proved successful in the arid and semiarid western range states. To organize and conduct this tour, FOA called upon the Bureau of Land Management, Soil Conservation Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Plant Industry, and



FIGURE 1. At Vekol Valley in Southern Arizona the Near East Tour group pauses for an outdoor lecture on range management by Francis Riordan, member of the New Mexico Section.

Bureau of Indian Affairs to set up a technical committee to organize and make arrangements for conducting the tour.

The primary purpose of the tour was to study range waterspreading techniques, but a closely allied subject for study was grazing management in low rainfall climates. Opportunity was also provided to devote some minor attention to irrigation and drainage practices, irrigated crop production and other agricultural work. The technical committee selected a tour staff consisting of Floyd D. Larson, Tour Leader; Odell Child, Business Manager; and William Mebus, staff member, all of the Bureau of Land Management; A. C. Hull and Floyd Hodgkin, Forest Service; and Allen F. Kinnison, Soil Conservation Service, staff members. Direct supervision of the tour was placed in the hands of Bureau of Land Management with the Regional Administrators concerned acting as tour coordinators in their regions, except in Texas where the Regional Conservator of the Soil Conserva-

tion Service acted as tour coordinator.

The technical committee, under sponsorship of the Foreign Operations Administration, also took steps to have a handbook on range waterspreading prepared and issued to the leaders while the tour was in progress. Technicians selected for preparation of the handbook were C. M. Stokes, Soil Conservation Service; Floyd D. Larson, Bureau of Land Management; and Kenneth Pearse, Forest Service. This handbook was later reedited and printed in volume.

The tour was conducted through eastern Montana, northwestern South Dakota, Wyoming, northwestern Colorado, Utah, southern California, New Mexico and western Texas, ending with a week of discussion at Texas A. & M. College. Many of our Range Society members assisted in planning and conducting this tour at the local level throughout the states mentioned above. Dr. Olaf Aamodt of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington, D. C., joined the staff from Riverside, California to Tue-

son, Arizona. Joseph Pechanec of the Forest Service in Washington, D. C. participated in the final discussions at Texas A. & M., as did Dr. Vernon Young of Texas A. & M. faculty.

The agricultural leaders from the Near East were well impressed with the advancements that have been made in the field of range management and range development in the western United States. They were surprised to see how similar many parts of our western range are with the grazing lands in their own countries. They were greatly stimulated by the prospects of taking home many ideas which could be used in their own countries to help improve productivity of their grazing lands and thus improve the standard of living of the rural areas. A number of the leaders joined the American Society of Range Management before they left, and one of them, Colonel Omar Draz of Egypt, was a guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Society in Omaha. Listed below are the leaders and the countries they represent:

Mohammed Ali Ajlouni	Jordan
Waheed Akhtar*	Pakistan
Shahab Ansari	Pakistan
Omar Bakir	Turkey
Hammad Ben Jazi	Jordan
Joseph Chehab	Lebanon
Omar Draz*	Egypt
Akif Ben Fayez	Jordan
Osman Ibrahim Gerbi	Libya
Hulusi Gul	Turkey
Nejat Gulgun	Turkey
Hildirim Gurgan	Turkey
Mohammed Ben Hadid	Jordan
Rashid Hamada*	Egypt
Sadek Hussein*	Saudi Arabia
Hazza Majali	Jordan
Ibrahim Muhalhil	Iraq
Omar Sabry*	Egypt
Yacoub Bey Salti*	Jordan
Rami Sarraj	Libya
Sulhi Sumer	Turkey
Ahmet Varisliligil	Turkey
Esmail Moini Zandi	Iran

\* Members of the American Society of Range Management.