

NUTRITIONAL ASPECTS OF
WIREGRASS FROM WEST
FLORIDA SANDHILLS

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Wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*) is the most abundant native plant in the longleaf pine-scrub oak sandhills of west Florida. Some of its nutritional aspects were assessed through chemical analysis of samples collected during winter and spring from burned and unburned forest ranges.

Wiregrass was most nutritious

Table 1. Maximum amounts of crude protein and minerals in wiregrass from west Florida sandhills.

Nutrient	Minimum estimated	Amount in forage from—	
	beef-cattle requirements	Burned area	Unburned area
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Crude protein	8-9	7.9	3.6
Phosphorus	.18-.21	.08	.03
Calcium	.20-.25	.91	.25
Magnesium	.04-.07	.07	.06
Potassium	.15-.20	.22	.22
Sodium	.02	.10	.02

in the spring and on burned ranges. Maximum amounts of several nutrients contained in spring forage are shown in Table 1. At best, crude protein approached minimum estimated requirements for beef cattle, while calcium, magnesium, po-

tassium, and sodium were adequate.

On unburned range crude protein was very low. Most of the minerals were merely adequate. Phosphorus was seriously deficient in both burned and unburned forage.