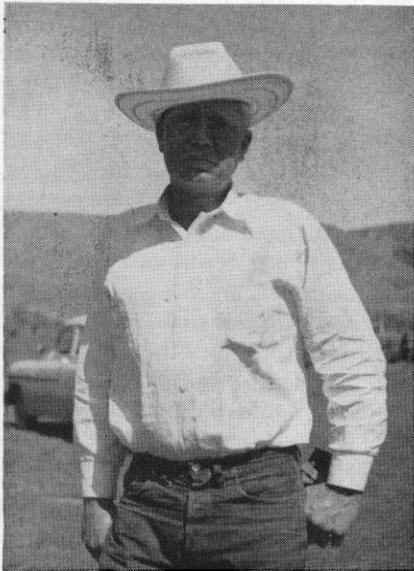


Supplemental Feeding—A Profitable Operation in the Intermountain Region

CLAUDE STAPLES, Brigham City, Utah



Claude Staples

Feeding good alfalfa hay at calving time is a very sound investment. Cows give more milk, have less trouble calving, and calves get off to a better start.

This operation is carried out on what is known as the Fort Ranch, which is located on the west side Promontory Mountain adjacent to the Great Salt Lake in Utah. This ranch is used mainly to winter beef cattle. Cows winter on native desert vegetation consisting of shad-scale, winterfat, greasewood, western wheatgrass, sand dropseed, and, of course, cheatgrass and Russian thistles. Near the first of February, calving cows are put in native meadow. The dry feed consists of saltgrass, sedge, rush, and on the higher spots alkali sacaton. The ground is usually hard frozen. About 5 pounds of high-quality hay per head per day is fed. The cows harvest all the dry grass and on March 1 start calving. Cows continue getting alfalfa for about

three weeks. At this time the feed on the adjacent desert benches is ready for use. This consists of black sage, shad-scale, flarree, native clover, Indian ricegrass, sand dropseed, etc. In addition, about 700 acres have been seeded to tall wheatgrass in one pasture, intermediate wheatgrass in another and pubescent wheatgrass in a third. These pastures are rotated so that at least one goes to seed each year and provides fall and winter feed.

The number of cows having pro-

His father the general manager of the Bar B Company, an outfit running 10,000 head of cattle in northern Utah and Montana, hard-working Claude Staples grew up in the ranching business. He succeeded his father as manager until the Company's holdings were broken up. Since then he has operated his own ranch and worked for the Bar B Company, now running 400 breeding cows and several thousand feeders.

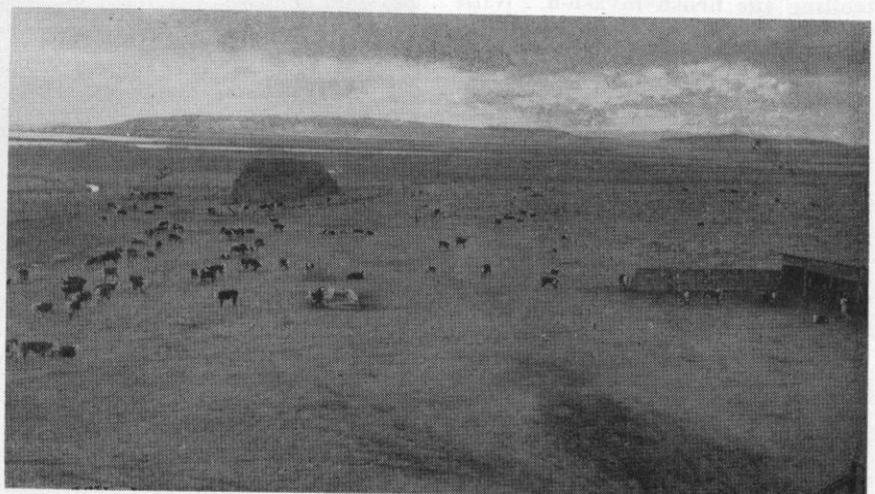
He knows and talks grass and livestock feed.

lapsed uterus decreased from seven when 10 pounds of weathered low quality hay was fed to one when 5 pounds of good green alfalfa with dry grass was fed. A chemical analysis is required to insure that only high-protein high-carotene hay is used.

When cattle are kept on the ranch during the summer, calves are creep-fed. Cows are fed supplement and salt in self-feeders after the grass dries up in the summer. "Cows may look thin at times during the year, but they never get weak."

A range plan worked out in cooperation with the Northern Utah Soil Conservation District, is being used as a guide. In order to handle the stock, approximately 22 miles of interior cross fences were constructed.

A rotated deferred system of grazing is followed on the entire ranch except the high desert mountain to the east. This part of the ranch is grazed year-long by a herd of 40 mares and their offspring. These mares run with a quarter horse stallion, Desert Star. Dark Chubby, another quarter horse, is used on Desert Star's daughters. Due to good breeding and being raised in rough country where they rustle for feed, the colts are much in demand.



At calving time, cows on native desert range are fed about 5 pounds of high-quality alfalfa hay each day.