



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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PRAIRIE DOGS DESTROY GRAZING LANDS.

Not a single redeeming trait, so far as its food habits are concerned, is the verdict pronounced on the prairie dog by the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, after years of experiments conducted in Arizona under various conditions. Prairie dogs' tastes so nearly resemble those of cattle that they are serious food-robbers on our grazing lands.

In times of drought the competition between the two becomes deadly. Experiments indicate that the rodents do not eat anything that cattle do not, and further that the two eat the grasses in the same order of preference: sand dropseed is preferred to western wheatgrass, and, when present with these, blue grama appears to be third in order of choice. The wheatgrass apparently endures grazing by both prairie dogs and stock better than the dropseed.

The results of the experiments have just been published by the department as Department Bulletin 1227, Damage to Range Grasses by the Zuni Prairie Dog. Copies of the bulletin may be had free, as long as the supply lasts, by writing to the department at Washington, D.C.

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