



Sagebrush in Prisons Project Newsletter

Vol 1, Issue 8, October 2019

Sagebrush in Prisons is an ecological education program for incarcerated adults, a partnership of the Institute for Applied Ecology, Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming DEQ, and State and Federal Correctional Institutions and is a part of the Sustainability in Prisons Project.

WHAT SHOULD WE BE DOING? SAGEBRUSH CREW TO-DO LIST:

Water - reduce watering depending on the weather. Water less if it's been rainy, more if not.

Test soil pH every other week- the ideal range is 5-8. Add lime if pH is 5.0 or below.

Fertilize- Reduce or stop fertilizing to harden off the plants for the wild.

Fill out data sheet daily- record daily activity and anything worth noting.

Watch for root rot- if root rot is present, separate infected containers from non- infected ones and let the infected ones dry out completely.

Rotate trays 180° once a week- this prevents the plants on the outside edge from drying out.

Boxing up- begin according to BLM planting schedule.



TAKE THE SAGEBRUSH WHIZ QUIZ

from the Sage Grouse Initiative website

<https://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/sage-whiz-quiz-sagebrush/>

Check your answers at the bottom of the other side.



1. Which state claims the sagebrush as its official state plant?

- A. Oregon
- B. Nevada
- C. Wyoming

2. Big sagebrush's scientific name is "Artemisia tridentata." Tridentata refers to which characteristic of the sagebrush?

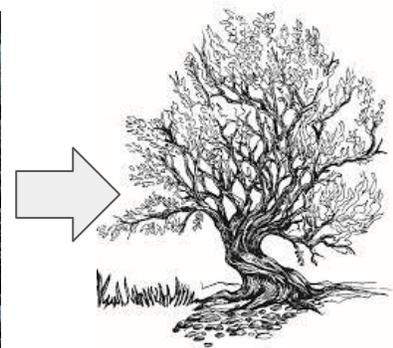
- A. The three teeth on the ends of sagebrush leaves
- B. The stringy bark that appears on older sagebrush stems
- C. The silver-grey-green color of sagebrush leaves

3. How many sub-species of "Artemisia tridentata" are currently catalogued by the National Plant Data Center?

- A. Eight
- B. Twelve
- C. Six

4. Big sagebrush and the culinary sage plant are the same.

- True
- False





SPP REGIONAL REPORTS: 9 PRISONS IN 5 STATES

★ **Warner Creek C.F.** in Lakeview, Oregon grew **30,000** sagebrush, and **3,000** bitterbrush plants this year. They will start boxing up on October 21st. "Last year we had a little bit of a struggle with our bitterbrush, we lost quite a few due to the pH levels being off, but this year they all look so good. We really watched the pH and it is working." - C. Knittel

★ **Snake River C. F.** in Ontario, Oregon grew **57,562** sagebrush and **198** milkweed plants this year. Thankfully they didn't have any issues with root rot this year. The average height of their sagebrush plants is 4", with several reaching 8".

★ **South Boise Women's C.C.** in Kuna, Idaho grew **26,796** sagebrush and **1,000** bitterbrush this year. They struggled with root rot due to overwatering, but this lessened after separating out the infected plants.

★ **Idaho State C.C.** in Kuna, Idaho grew **50,568** sagebrush and **4,200** bitterbrush this year. There were struggles with root rot and shorter than usual plants this year.

★ **Nevada & California:** Four prisons grew a total of **~252,000** sagebrush to deliver to four local BLM offices for outplanting. Here is the breakdown by prison: **Lovelock C.C.** ~43,000 **Warm Springs C.C.** ~76,000 **Northern Nevada C.C. Unit 5** ~55,000, **Unit 3** ~33,000, **FCI Herlong** ~45,000

"We had many obstacles this year including squirrels and not one, but two different root rot pathogens (Pythium and rhizoctonia). Both the seeds and the peat moss straight from the bag tested negative for both pathogens. We are still working on possible sources. We have also had many successes this year, including a new watering from below method dubbed the "Herlong method", lots of successfully transplanted sagebrush babies, and great sagebrush crews that learned all about why sagebrush matters!" - S. Swim

★ **Honor Farm** in Riverton, Wyoming began growing sagebrush for the first time this year after building a new greenhouse. They grew **25,000** sagebrush including Wyoming Big Sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and Silver Sage (*Artemisia cana*). 3,500 will be planted by volunteers in the Red Desert on National Public Lands Day, 5,000 will be planted near Cody in early October. About 12,000 seedlings will be planted by inmates on abandoned mine lands. The remaining plants will be distributed among other Wyoming BLM offices. There were no major pest or disease issues for this first year of growing, and the crew did an excellent job rearing the plants. - T. Russel



ALL 9 PRISONS COMBINED GREW A TOTAL OF:
441,926 SAGEBRUSH AND 8,200 BITTERBURSH!



FUN FACTS:

Adapted from the Sage Grouse Initiative website

1. Sagebrush gets its pungent smell from camphor, terpenoids and other volatile oils. Camphor is used topically to relieve pain, irritation, and itching, and is the active ingredient in Vics VapoRub, Ben Gay, Tiger Balm, and Icy Hot.
2. Sagebrush is an evergreen shrub; though individuals may lose some leaves in late summer, the plant generally retains its leaves year-round.
3. Sagebrush are pollinated by wind, but large, mature sagebrush can also reproduce through rhizomes – shoots that extend from the parent plant underground and sprout as a new plant. The new plants are genetically identical clones of their parents.



Quiz Answers: 1. B 2. A 3. C 4. False