

# In Vitro and In situ Gas Production Technique, Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) and Volatile Fatty Acids of *Grewia Tenax*- Original Paper

Mohamed. A. M. ELsiddig\*, Ibrahim Ahmed Bashir Ibrahim, Ayman Osman  
Ahmed Omar

Faculty of Animal Production, University of Gezira, Gezira, Al-Managil, P.O 20, Sudan.

\*Corresponding author: elkhairey11@yahoo.com

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## Abstract

Nutritive value and fermentation characteristics of leaves, green shoots, and seed cake of *Grewia tenax* were evaluated by measuring the gas production in situ for a period of 96 h. For in situ technique duplicate nylon bags were incubated for 0, 2, 4, 6, 12, 24, 36, 48, 72 and 96 h in three bults fitted with rumen cannulae. The rate of gas production (c) varied significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) among the fruits and the other parts of *Grewia tenax*. While no significant differences were observed among the green shoots, seeds and leaves. The highest rate of gas production was obtained from fruits while the lowest values were observed in the leaves. The potential degradability (a+b) varied significantly between the leaves and the other parts of *Grewia tenax*. Generally the ammonia concentration increased with the time past feedings. No significant variations were observed between the treatments. Ruminant volatile fatty acid concentration (VFA) in this study was not significantly affected by addition of different levels of *Grewia tenax* fruits in to ruminant ration at levels 5%, 10% and 15%, fixed equal percentage of groundnut cake concentration. This result suggests that the *Grewia tenax* under study are all potential sources of energy for ruminant animals.

**Key words:** gas production, Nutritive value, Ruminant, *Grewia tenax*, volatile fatty acid

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## I. Introduction

Animal feed contributes more than 70 % of production costs [1]. Shrubs and trees are reported to be sustainable for ruminants in the tropics and subtropical areas [2]. In Sudan, *Grewia tenax* is distributed in the dry grass savanna, in Red Sea Hills, Northern and Central Sudan, Blue Nile, White Nile, Kassala, Kordofan [3]. In general, *Grewia* species are found to be widely distributed in the tropical and subtropical areas of Africa, Southeast Asian continents, Arabian Peninsula, Australia [4]. Also, *Grewia* species are found to be widely distributed in the tropical and subtropical areas of Africa, Southeast Asian continents, Arabian Peninsula, Australia (5; 4). Thus, better utilization of non-agricultural by-products which do not compete with human foods is imperative.

Young leaves of *Grewia tenax* are consumed by livestock; they are slightly palatable at the end of dry seasons, and have fairly good feed value [6]. *Grewia tenax* is used as medicine to treat various diseases including jaundice and hepatic disorders [7]. In Kenya plant parts are used as a remedy for colds and chest complaints and also as a chief constituent in a typhoid remedy. Also a mucilaginous bark preparation is used by women against hair vermin [6].

*Grewia tenax* common plant species are available in all seasons in semi desert area and potentially important as forage sources for honeybee. Seed dormancy is a typical feature of *Grewia tenax* for seed survival under unfavorable climatic conditions [8]. Many such plants have been identified, but the lack of data on their chemical composition has limited the prospects for their utilization [9; 10].

The *in vitro* gas production technique measures the volume of gas produced, which reflects the end result of the fermentation of the feed substrate to volatile fatty acids (VFAs), microbial biomass and the neutralization of the VFAs produced. Determine the nutritive value of feedstuffs, since the degradation rate and extent and rumen fermentation can be easily determined by measuring cumulative gas production [11]. The *in vitro* gas production system helps to better quantify nutrient utilization, and its accuracy in describing digestibility in animals has been validated in numerous experiments [12].

The main objective of this study was to assess the feeding values of green shoots, leaves, flesh fruit and seeds cake of *Grewia tenax* using *in vitro* gas production technique.

The objectives of this study are to assess and study the potential macro and micro-nutrients and chemical contents of guddaim fruits, and its contents of some vitamins, amino acids, which can be considered an important for human health and the knowledge the nutritional value of guddaim fruits and to take advantage of them in various nutritional applications.

## II. Materials and Methods

### Study area

This study was conducted in the Sudan University of Science and Technology, dairy farm at kuku during November 2012.

### Growiatenax tree

*Growiatenax* an ever green tree is multipurpose tree know for many uses

### Sample collection

The *Growiatenax* ripened fruit were collected from local markets in kordofan and Darfur. The leaves and green shoot were collected manually from the tree. The seed cake was prepared by mechanical extraction of the ripened fruit.

### Animal management and feeding

Three castrated steers local breed (Kenana) aged 3 years were fitted with rumen cannula as described by [13]. They maintained and a well-balanced rations of concentrates and roughage and fed twice daily. Water and salt licks were available all time.

### Ration ingredients

#### Ingredients of experimental ration and chemical composition as %

The experimental ration described by Basheir, *et al.*, (14).

Ingredients %	treatments			
	0%	5%	10%	15%
Sorghum	30	30	30	30
Wheat bran	39	34	29	24
Molasses	15	15	15	15
Groundnut cake	15	15	15	15
Growiatenax fruit	0	5	10	15
Salts	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Analysis</b>				
M E ( MJ/Kg)	11.11	11.68	11.04	11.01
C P%	17.30	16.80	16.47	16.05

M E = metabolisable energy; CP = crud protein; MJ = Mega joule ; Kg = Kilogram

### Rumen environment

The three fistulae calves were penned with free access to water and feed, and it were fed on maintenance level on the four treatments individually.

The rumen liquor was taken by using 20cc syringe and put in clean aseptic tube from the three calves at different five periods (0,2, 4, 6 and 8 hours) for each treatment. To study the following parameters

### Rumen pH reading

A sample from rumen liquor should be removed by using 20cc syringe of approximately 60 ml of rumen fluid was withdrawn from the rumen. Before taking reading the electronic pH meter should calibrate then the rumen liquor was held in container and the pH meter was immersed in the container shaken well until the reading stabilized in the pH meter and the rumen pH was recorded.

### Gas production

Production of gas was determined according to the procedure of [15]. About 200 mg of feed sample from each *Grewiatenax* tree parts was weighed in three replications and carried into calibrated glass syringes (100 ml - pre-warmed), fitted with Vaseline lubricated pistons. The inoculums used was the ruminal content of three steers with cannula in the rumen, fed free choice feed, water and mineral salts. Manually vacuum pump was used to collect rumen fluid and immediately transferred into prewar med thermos flasks to the laboratory, filtered through eight layers of cheesecloth. Buffered mineral solution was added to rumen fluid with constant stirring, while maintained in a water bath at 39°C. A total of 30 ml incubation medium consisting of 10 ml rumen fluid, 5 ml of bicarbonate buffer, 5 ml of macro-mineral solution and 10 ml of distilled water was then dispensed into pre-warmed glass syringes containing the feed samples. After closing the clips on the silicon tube at the syringe tip, syringes were gently shaken and the clips were opened to remove gas by pushing the piston

upwards to achieve complete gas removal. After closing the clip, the initial volume was recorded and the syringes were placed in a temperature controlled incubation rotor set at 39°C.

Three blanks containing 30 ml of medium as well as triplicate samples of reference hay and concentrate feed of known gas production parameters were also included as standards. Incubation was completed in duplicate within each run and runs were replicated yielding four observations per sample. Gas production was recorded before incubation (0) and 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 72 and 96 h after incubation according to time pattern of [16]. The gas produced due to fermentation of substrate was corrected by the blank syringes (containing no substrate). Cumulative gas production data were fitted to the model of [17].

$$Y = a + b(1 - \exp(-ct))$$

where, Y is the volume of gas produced at time „t“ (ml); a is the gas production from the immediately soluble fraction (ml); b is the gas production from the in soluble fraction.; (a+b) the potential gas production (ml), and c is the gas production ratio constant for in soluble fraction (b), (ml/hr); and t is the incubation time (h).

### **Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) determination**

As described by Conway, [18] using Conway units. In the outer chamber of each unit 2 ml of saturated potassium carbonate (K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>) were put while in the inner chamber 2 ml of mixed indicator were pipette (40g. Boric acid + (0.02g Methylred + 0.06g. Bcg in 100 ml ethanol) complete to 2000 ml with.W.D). Covers were then replaced leaving small opening on the upper side of each unit through which 0.5 ml of the sample was added by 0.05 ml pipette.

The opening was then closed and the tilted unit set upright while shaking gently 2-3 times so as to ensure the thorough mixing of the sample with the saturated potassium carbonate in the outer chamber.

The units were left for 6 hrs., or 40 minutes at 60c. weights were put on the top of each cover and the units were then carefully removed and the content of the inner chamber calculated against 0.01 N sulphuric acid solutions using Conway micro burette, then NH<sub>3</sub> in rumen liquor = T × N × 14 × 100 = MG /100 ml volume of the sample where

T = Titration

N = Normality of acid.

### **Volatile fatty acid determination**

For volatile fatty acid determination as described by [19] the strained rumen liquor was deproteinized by adding 10 ml of 0.1 normal HCl to 10 ml from the sample 50 ml volumetric flask was shaken thoroughly and filled to the mark with distilled water after a lapse of 5 minutes. The precipitate portion was filtered. 5 ml from orthophosphoric acid was added.

The distillation was continued until 50 ml. distillations were collected in 100ml conical flask receiver. The distillation was then recovered and 3 drops of 0.04 % phenol red indicator was added. Then the nitrogen was bubbled through the distillate to remove any carbon dioxide and then titration was made against 0.01 sodium hydroxide. From a burette the amount of mill equivalents VFAs in 100 ml of sample were calculated in the following manner = V × N × 100.

Where

V = volume of NaOH

N = normality of NaOH

### **Statistical analysis**

Data on nutrient compositions including calculated and estimated gas production parameters were subjected to one-way (ANOVA) analysis by using SAS software package [20] and differences of means were separated by Duncan multiple range test. Moreover, OMD and ME values using the General Linear Model (GLM) according of statistic, (Analytical software.2000).

## **III. Results And Discussion**

### **Rumen PH**

Rumen pH values of the animals fed the experimental diets are shown in table (2). No significant differences were observed between the control diet and the other diets or among the diets b, c and d. Animals on the control diet showed numerically lower values at all post feeding time than the other animals.

Addition of different levels of *Grewia tenax* fruits into the ruminant ration at levels 5, 10, and 15 % to fixed similar percentage of groundnut cake was not found to affect rumen PH up to eight hours postfeeding, PH ranged from 5.05 to 6.00 in this study, this result is on line with the normal rumen pH that found by [21].

The mean PH of the rumen liquor was almost the same on the test diets (6.00, 5.90 and 5.93 ), but was higher (p<0.05) for the control diet . rumen content PH was found to decrease after feeding , reaching its lowest value about 6hrs after feeding , this accord with results reported by [22 and 23] who determined that rumen content

PH after feeding changes in a characteristic way. There was no difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in PH of the rumen isonitrogenous diets based on different natural protein source [24]. The optimal PH of rumen protolytic enzyme ranges from 5.5 to 7.0 according to **Kopecny and Wallance**, [25]; however, protein degradation was reduced as PH decreased . [26].

**Table (2)** *In situ* Rumen pH (Mean  $\pm$  SD) in the different incubation time (0-8 hrs) of the cattle fed different level of *Grewia tenax* fruits with (SD) standard deviation.

G. tenax fruit (%) in ration	Sample fitted values of rumen pH				
	pH (0)	pH (2)	pH (4)	pH (6)	pH (8)
0	5.35 $\pm$ 0.35 <sup>a</sup>	5.40 $\pm$ 0.42 <sup>a</sup>	5.50 $\pm$ 0.57 <sup>a</sup>	5.10 $\pm$ 0.14 <sup>b</sup>	5.60 $\pm$ 0.24 <sup>a</sup>
5	6.00 $\pm$ 0.14 <sup>a</sup>	5.05 $\pm$ 0.21 <sup>a</sup>	5.40 $\pm$ 0.14 <sup>a</sup>	5.35 $\pm$ 0.07 <sup>ab</sup>	5.55 $\pm$ 0.35 <sup>a</sup>
10	5.60 $\pm$ 0.28 <sup>a</sup>	5.05 $\pm$ 0.21 <sup>a</sup>	5.55 $\pm$ 0.07 <sup>a</sup>	5.35 $\pm$ 0.07 <sup>ab</sup>	5.25 $\pm$ 0.21 <sup>a</sup>
15	5.90 $\pm$ 0.28 <sup>a</sup>	5.05 $\pm$ 0.35 <sup>a</sup>	5.40 $\pm$ 0.28 <sup>a</sup>	5.45 $\pm$ 0.07 <sup>b</sup>	5.50 $\pm$ 0.14 <sup>a</sup>
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

a, b, c, and d : means within the same row followed by the different superscripts are significantly different ( $p < 0.05$ )., Zero = diet content groundnut cake (control diet). , NS = not significant., SD = standard deviation.

### GaGas production for the Different *Grewia tenax* parts:

Gas production for the different parts of *Grewia tenax* at different incubation periods is shown in the figure (1) There are considerable variations in gas production rate at all incubation times. The highest gas production was observed in the fruits, while the leaves showed the lowest gas production during all the incubation times.

Table (3) shows that the soluble fraction (a) varied significantly between the green shoots and seed cake, while no significant difference were observed between the leaves and fruits. The highest soluble fraction was obtained in the green shoots, while the lowest value in the seed.

Gas production from the slowly degradable fraction (b) varied significantly between the leaves and other parts. While no significant differences were observed between the Green shoots, fruits and seed.

Rate of gas production (c) varied significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) among the fruits and the other parts of *Grewia tenax*. While no significant differences were observed among the green shoots, seeds and leaves. The highest rate of gas production was obtained from fruits while the lowest values were observed in the leaves. The potential degradability (a+b) varied significantly between the leaves and the other parts of *Grewia tenax*. While no significant difference were observed among the other parts. The highest potential degradability was obtained from the leaves while the lowest value was observed in the fruits. Organic matter digestibility (OMD) varied significantly between the fruits and the other parts of *Grewia tenax*. While no significant difference was observed between the green shoots, seeds and the leaves. The lowest value was observed in the leaves.

The calculated Metabolisable energy (ME) content in the seeds cake was significantly lowest than the other parts. The leaves, green shoots and fruits have similar Metabolisable energy value.

In this study Gas production value of *Grewia tenax* leaves was 2.5, 3.5, 4, 6, 7.5 and 13.5 ml/200mg at 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, and 72 hours incubation time respectively, this result showed lower gas production value than that reported by [27] in the *Quereus cerris* leaves (20, 24, 35, 42, 46, and 48 ml/200mg at 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, and 72 hrs incubation time . gas production from quickly soluble fraction (a) degradable fraction (b) of *Grewia tenax* leaves in this study were 1.73% and 53.05% which was similar to the *Quereus cerris* leaves (2.40% and 50.32%) [27]. Gas production value of *Grewia tenax* seed cake was 3, 4, 6, 14, 17.5 and 21.5ml/200mg at 3, 6, 12, 24, 48 and 72 hours incubation time respectively which was lower than the gas production value of *Bambara ground* seed (46, 55, 70, 91, 100 and 103ml/200mg at 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, and 72hrs incubation time respectively[28]. Gas production from quickly soluble fraction (a), degradable fraction (b) and the rate of the gas production of *Grewia tenax* seed cake (c) were (0.03%, 24.04%, and 0.03%) which was lower than the 5.76%, 60.31%, and 6.23% for *Bambara ground* seeds [28].

Organic matter digestibility of seed cake in this study was 47.58% which was lower than the organic matter digestibility of *Bambara ground* seeds (62.72%) [28], it was similar to groundnut cake 48.47%, [29]. Metabolisable energy (ME) of the *Grewia tenax* seed cake was 4.89mj/kg DM is lower than the ME in *Bambara ground* seed 10.78mj/kgDM [28], groundnut cake 11.07mj/kgDM [29].

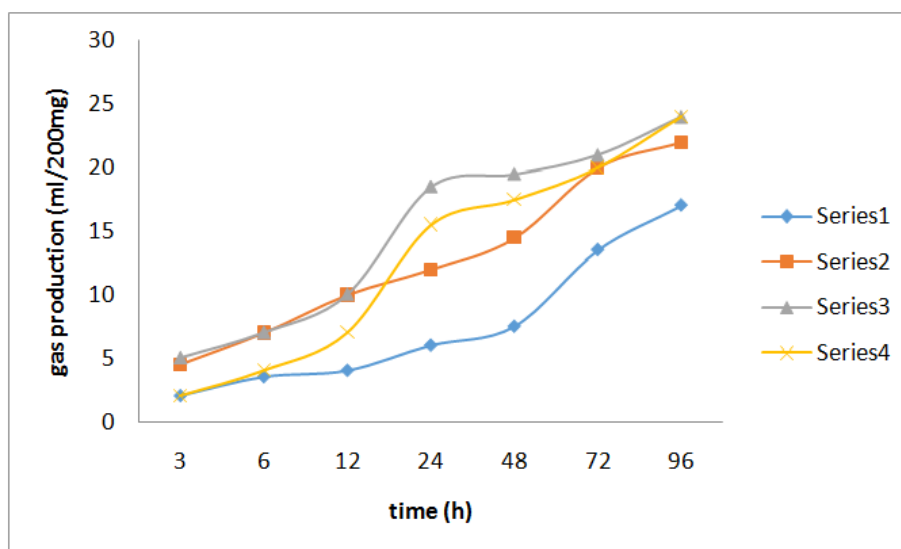
### Rumen ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>)

Table (4).Instates the rumen ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) concentration of the animals fed the experimental diets at different times post feeding. Generally the ammonia concentration increased with the time past feedings. No significant variations were observed between the treatments, but the trend is that the control diet showed the lowest ammonia concentration, while animals on diet B and C showed the highest ammonia NH<sub>3</sub> concentration.

Rumen ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) concentration in this study was not significantly affected by addition of different levels of *Grewia tenax* fruits into ruminant ration at levels 5%, 10%, and 15% fixed equal percentage of groundnut cake in the present studies.

Rumen content of ammonia was found to be decreased after feeding reached its lowest value about 8hrs after feeding, [30] reported that decrease in ruminal PH from 6.5 to 5.7; reduced ruminal ammonia concentration, the rumen NH<sub>3</sub> often varies widely throughout the day depending on the feeding regime and feed quality, [31].

A decrease in the normal PH induced by the formation of VFA, from starch caused a decrease in the rate of NH<sub>3</sub> liberation and an increase in protein biosynthesis [32]. The NH<sub>3</sub> absorbed from the digestive tract is very efficiently converted by the liver into urea and should there give a response in the concentration of the blood urea [33].



**Figure (1):-**  
Gas production (ml/200mgDM) of experimental samples at different Incubation times:  
Series 1 = Leaves of *Grewia tenax*.  
Series 2 = green shoots of *Grewia tenax*.  
Series 3 = fruits of *Grewia tenax*.  
Series 4 = seeds cake of *Grewia tenax*.

**Table (3) In situ Gas production kinetics of DM different experimental samples:**

Samples	A	B	c	a+b	OMD	ME(Mj/kg)
Leaves	1.73±0.66 <sup>b</sup>	53.05±15.37 <sup>a</sup>	0.00±0.00 <sup>b</sup>	54.78±14.91 <sup>a</sup>	43.57±0.39 <sup>c</sup>	5.95±0.06 <sup>a</sup>
Green shoots	4.15±1.06 <sup>a</sup>	25.45±5.55 <sup>b</sup>	0.02±0.01 <sup>b</sup>	29.61±6.60 <sup>b</sup>	45.71±0.59 <sup>b</sup>	5.91±0.16 <sup>a</sup>
Fruit	1.11±1.26 <sup>b</sup>	22.22±2.20 <sup>b</sup>	0.05±0.01 <sup>a</sup>	23.33±1.17 <sup>b</sup>	54.39±0.78 <sup>a</sup>	5.51±0.12 <sup>a</sup>
Seeds	0.03±0.67 <sup>b</sup>	24.04±1.06 <sup>b</sup>	0.03±0.01 <sup>ab</sup>	24.06±2.25 <sup>b</sup>	47.58±0.78 <sup>b</sup>	4.89±0.17 <sup>a</sup>
Sig	*	*	*	*	*	*

a, b, c and d Means in the same column values have different superscripts are significantly different (p<0.05)  
\* = Significant., a = the gas production from the immediately soluble fraction (ml), b = the gas production from the insoluble fraction (ml), c = the gas production rate constant from the insoluble fraction (h<sup>-1</sup>), a+b = Potential gas production., ME = Metabolisable energy., OMD = organic matter digestibility., SEM = standard error of means.

**Table (4)** *In situ* rumen ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) (mg/100) concentration (Mean± SD) in the different incubation time (0-8 hrs) of the cattle fed different level of *Grewia tenax* fruits with (SD) standard deviation.

G. tenax fruit (%) in ration	Sample fitted values of rumen NH <sub>3</sub>				
	NH <sub>3</sub> (0)	NH <sub>3</sub> (2)	NH <sub>3</sub> (4)	NH <sub>3</sub> (6)	NH <sub>3</sub> (8)
0	0.49±0.14	0.68±0.14	0.82±0.14	1.00±0.00	1.27±0.07
5	0.49±0.07	0.68±0.00	0.81±0.07	1.00±0.00	1.28±0.07
10	0.49±0.14	0.67±0.07	0.78±0.07	1.00±0.00	1.27±0.07
15	0.49±0.07	0.67±0.00	0.78±0.21	1.00±0.00	1.28±0.14
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

a, b, c, and d : means within the same row followed by the different superscripts are significantly different (p<0.05)., Zero = diet content groundnut cake (control diet)., NS = not significant., SD = standard deviation.

### Volatile fatty acids (VFAs) production

Volatile fatty acids (VFAs) concentration of different levels of *Grewia tenax* cake in steer diets was shown in Table (5). The Volatile fatty acids (VFAs) concentration in this study shows no significant difference among the tested diet. Volatile fatty acids (VFAs) concentration increases with the time of incubation.

Ruminal Volatile fatty acid concentration (VFA) in this study was not significantly affected by addition of different levels of *Grewia tenax* fruits in to ruminant ration at levels 5%, 10% and 15%, fixed equal percentage of groundnut cake concentration , the VFA were highest at 8hrs post feeding and then declined slowly up to 36hrs post feeding .

Conversely, [34] who demonstrated VFA in rumen of sheep before feeding (4.4±0.9) ; (4.5±0.7) and 3hrs after (7.1±1.3);(7.7±1.6)and (7.6±1.3 )mEq/dl. The effect of PH on VFA absorption influence absorption of NH<sub>3</sub>. [35], reported that when rumen PH was 7.55, 6.21, or 7.58 NH<sub>3</sub> absorption was 26.5 and 11mEq/liter/hour and VFA was 4.18 and 4mEq/liter/hour respectively.

[36] Found that at PH on 6.5 that the transport of NH<sub>3</sub> across the rumen epithelium increased with the concentration gradient and that NH<sub>3</sub> absorption was increased by absorption of VFA. Absorption of NH<sub>3</sub> was rapid at PH 6.5 but Negligible at PH 4.5.

**Table (5)** *In situ* volatile fatty acids concentration (VFA) (mg/100 ml) (Mean± SD) in the different incubation time (0-8 hrs) of the cattle fed different levels of *Grewia tenax* fruits with (SD) standard deviation.

G. tenax fruit (%) in ration	Sample fitted values of rumen VFA				
	VFA(0)	VFA (2)	VFA (4)	VFA (6)	VFA (8)
0	0.21±0.00	0.39±0.14	0.71±0.14	0.89±0.07	1.65±0.07
5	0.20±0.00	0.39±0.14	0.72±0.07	0.88±0.07	1.65±0.07
10	0.21±0.00	0.41±0.07	0.70±0.14	0.88±0.07	1.65±0.07
15	0.20±0.07	0.40±0.00	0.69±0.07	0.88±0.07	1.75±0.07
Sig	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

a, b, c, and d : means within the same row followed by the different superscripts are significantly different (p<0.05)., Zero = diet content groundnut cake (control diet)., NS = not significant., SD = standard deviation

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