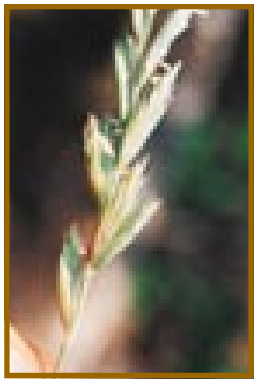
Western Wheatgrass

- ♦ Palatable & Nutritious
- ♦ Withstands closer grazing
- ♦ Establishes easy
- ♦ Fall growth—green into winter
- ♦ Excellent on terraces & stream banks
- ♦ Great for erosion control

5-7 PLS lbs/Acre

May—June



2302 SE Creekview Ste 6
Ankeny IA 50021

515-965-4425
800-810-1618
www.dftseed.com

DES MOINES FORAGE & TURF SEED CORP.

Western Wheatgrass

DESCRIPTION

Western Wheatgrass is a cool season native grass that can be found growing on many sites principally in the central and northern Great Plains but has been used in other areas of the country successfully. It establishes quite easily in areas of heavy soils where water can accumulate for short periods of time. Growth begins in the fall, and under most conditions, the grass remains green throughout the winter. The majority of the growth occurs in the spring. The seed is produced in June with harvest falling in late June or early July. The plant will then go dormant for the hot summer period.

APPLICATION

Western Wheatgrass is nutritious and grown often in pure stands as forage for livestock. The hay is high in protein if cut during the late bloom stage. Haying after seed production and harvest merely produced filler forage for livestock. One characteristic of Western Wheatgrass that is different from its warm season grass cousins is that it withstands closer grazing than the taller species. However, if this closer grazing is done during the spring months it will weaken the stand.

USES

Forage for livestock. Another primary use of Western Wheatgrass is associated with erosion control where it is used to seed waterways, terraces and stream banks. It often grows through standing silt with no difficulty; a slightly alkaline or saline condition is also tolerated.

SEEDING

Rates: 8-10 PLS lbs/Acre. on new seeding.

Depth: Plant the seed no more than 1/2 inch deep. Emerging seedlings lack the strength to push through too much overlying soil. More seed has been lost to poor planting practices than anything else; this is especially true of seed depth.

CULTURAL PRACTICES

Soil Preparation: For the best conservation practice, no-till the seed into the stubble of a previous crop or the existing stand of another species that has been successfully eradicated. Pay close attention to previous land use practices. If a row crop has been planted for many years in succession a herbicide carryover is possible. If you feel you must plow up the site before planting, prepare your seedbed like you would for any other crop. The seedbeds need to be firm, not fluffy, so the seed will not be planted at an inappropriate depth. Use a cultipacker to firm your seedbed or some other type of roller that will create a smooth planting area that is not too hard.

NPK requirement: We do not recommend the use of fertilizer the first year, at least not nitrogen. Moderate levels of phosphorus and potassium are beneficial, especially for root establishment, which is a primary activity of the plant the first year. Use a soil test to help you decide that rats. Fertilizer may be applied the second year to enhance vigor and production of forage. It is not necessary to fertilize at all, but stand strength may be compromised without it.

Weed Control: We recommend a controlled burn every 1-3 years if possible. If not, then a mowing pattern should be established in order to control woody species invasion and prevent thatch build up. If you mow, mow no lower than 8 inches and no later than August 1.

Grazing: Western Wheatgrass can tolerate moderate grazing but is damaged when grazed extensively in the spring when the majority of its growth is occurring. In addition to harming the structure of the plant, the heavy grazing increases below ground action of soil nematodes, due to the fact that heavily grazed grass has less root structure.

IDENTIFICATION

Clum: Erect, hollow, 12-40 inches tall, glabrous to glaucous, sterile shoots at the very base, growing singly or in small clusters.

Blades: Flat to involute, 4-10 inches long, up to .25 inch wide, glaucous, rigid, tapering to a point, bluish green, scabrous above, prominently veined.

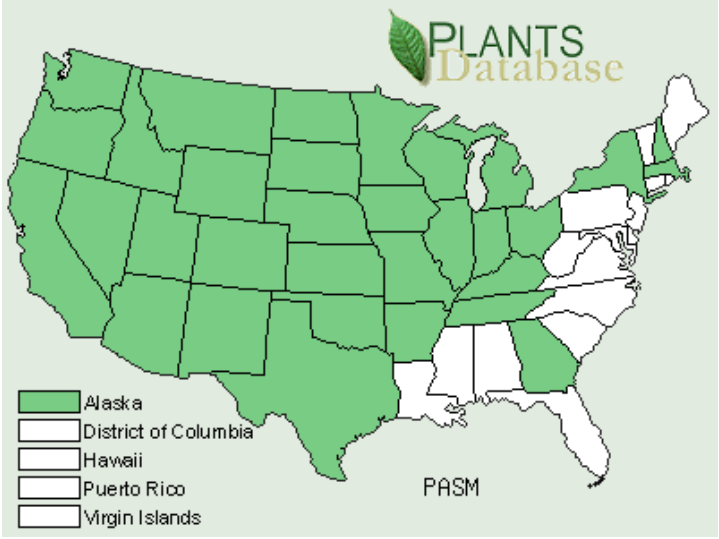
Sheath: Shorter than the internodes, rounded, glabrous or scabrous.

Ligule: Short, membranous ring, erose to somewhat ciliate, truncate.

Inflorescence: Terminal, erect, two-sided spike, 3-8 inches long.

Spikelets: Solitary or sometimes two per node, overlapping, 3-12 flowered, .6—1 inch long, glaucous. The lemmas and glumes have pointed tips.

Area of Adaptation



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