

Green Acres 101's #1 recommended grass for erosion control in non irrigated areas - low growing, vigorous & sod forming!

'SODAR' Wheatgrass

- A Drought-Resistant Western Native Turf Grass -

Agropyron riparium

ORIGIN: An improved native sod-forming wheatgrass collected near Canyon City, Grant County, Oregon, in an area of approximately 12 inches annual precipitation. It was released in 1954 by the Soil Conservation Service and the Idaho and Washington Agriculture Experiment Stations.

DESCRIPTION: Although commonly called streambank wheatgrass, Sodar has excellent drought tolerance. Its short growth form, vigorous sodding ability, narrow, lax leaves, seedling vigor, and longevity contribute to its excellence as an erosion control plant. It produces numerous stems and seed heads during the first two to three years, until it becomes fully sodded; thereafter seed head formation practically stops. It establishes easily from seed and does not become a weed. Mature plants are easily killed by normal tillage operations.

ADAPTATION AND USE: Sodar wheatgrass was selected and released as a special use grass for erosion control seedings within the semidesert or better soil zones and on irrigated lands. Forage yields are very low, so it doesn't attract wildlife. It establishes and produces a good sod in areas with 6 inches or more rainfall. Soil adaptation ranges from shallow to deep, moderately coarse to fine textured, and moderately saline to slightly acidic. Once established, it provides an excellent barrier to weed invasions. It can be used on airport interspaces, road rights-of-way, fence rows, ditch and canal banks (lined and unlined), reservoir embankments, non irrigated playgrounds, farmyards, and as a cover crop in windbreaks and orchards. Its use in waterway seedings has not been consistent; many seedings have washed out prior to establishment. Sodar is crowded out if the site is too wet.

SEEDBED: A good, firm, weed-free seedbed is essential to the full success of the seeding. Most areas left bare following construction are weed-free and can be seeded in the late fall or early the first spring following construction. It can be planted at other times with irrigation, though germinates better in cool weather.

SEEDING: For lawns, seed 3 pounds per 1000 square feet. For large areas, seeding rates of 10 pounds per acre have been satisfactory. If broadcast at 10 pounds per acre, there are 40 seeds per square foot. Non irrigated seedings in the 12 inches or less precipitation zone should be done in late fall by drilling. Spring seedings establish well in the better moisture zones, or if irrigated. If a drill cannot be used, the seed may be broadcast and raked or harrowed in. Depth of planting should not exceed 1 inch.

MANAGEMENT: New seedings should be given full protection until completely established and a minimum stubble height of 3 to 4 inches maintained thereafter. Do not spray with 2, 4-D until the plants have 6 or more leaves. Nitrogen applied at 20-40 pounds per acre will aid establishment on low fertility sites in the 8-inch or better precipitation zones.

Above information supplied by the great folks at the National Resource Conservation Service.