

# Meadow Foxtail

(Alopecurus pratensis)



Where does it grow? Meadow foxtail is found from Newfoundland and Labrador to Alaska, south to Delaware and Missouri; Montana, Idaho, and Oregon. In recent years it has become increasingly important in the Pacific Northwest, mostly in improved pastures, and will probably become more widespread with further development of seed production.

Climate--It does best where the climate is moist and cool but is not sensitive to heat or cold. It grows successfully where summer temperatures occasionally reach 100° F. and makes rather continuous winter growth where average mean minimum temperatures are 40-50° F.

Soil--Meadow foxtail makes its best growth on loams and clays of good fertility when well supplied with moisture. It is especially suited to swampy or overflow lands of a mucky or peaty nature. Good stands have been maintained, for many years, on low wet lands that are quite alkaline.

Is it important? Yes, meadow foxtail is of special value for pasture on lands too wet for most common grasses and legumes. It is one of the first grasses

to start in the spring and is approximately three weeks ahead of timothy for hay harvest. As pasture or hay, the feed value is equal to or better than timothy, although yields are definitely less.

What does it look like? Meadow foxtail differs greatly from other grasses commonly referred to as "foxtail", in that it lacks the characteristic long awns of other foxtails. Also, its agronomic and utility values are high and there is no evidence of weedy characteristics.

## Description:

Length of Life--Long-lived perennial.

Bunch or sod--Bunchgrass.

Height--Seed stalks, 1 to 3 feet tall.

Leaves--Blades basal and on seed stalks.

Seedhead--Tight cylindrical cluster 1 to 3 inches long. Seedhead has short beards giving it a fuzzy appearance.

How does it spread--Seeds.

Does it look like anything else? Several species of Alopecurus have a similar appearance but meadow foxtail can be distinguished by its cylindrical head. It is most often confused with timothy (RPL 47). Both plant form and seedhead are similar. But, generally, meadow foxtail is shorter, the head is darker, and the head has short beards giving it a fuzzy appearance.

Timothy



Meadow Foxtail

