

Tall Wheatgrass

(Agropyron elongatum)



Where does it grow? This plant grows on semi-arid soils that once grew wheat or other dryland crops. It has also given very high yields on alkaline soils where there is adequate moisture. Tall wheatgrass is used in pure stands for soil and moisture conservation because of its special adaptations and its late summer growth. In the Pacific Northwest it is grown chiefly in central Washington, central and southeastern Oregon, and southern Idaho.

Is it important? Tall wheatgrass is an introduced late blooming and maturing grass. This characteristic of late maturity makes it available in providing grazing after midsummer when most other grasses have dried up. This grass can be used for either pasture or hay but becomes very coarse and unpalatable if allowed to mature. Tall wheatgrass should be considered primarily for soils with salt content too high for more palatable species to grow.

What does it look like? Tall wheatgrass is a coarse, tall, vigorous, stemmy bunchgrass. Key vegetative characteristics of tall wheatgrass are long, narrow, stiff seedheads and the great height of the plant. With favorable moisture, it may grow to a height of 5 or 6 feet.

Description:

Length of Life--Long-lived perennial.

Height--Usually $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 feet.

Bunch or sod--Bunchgrass.

How does it spread--Seeds.

Season of use--Late spring and summer.

Leaves--Many basal leaves.

Heads--Long, narrow, and stiff.

Does it look like anything else? Tall wheatgrass is not easily confused with any other grass because of its height; coarseness; and long, narrow, stiff seedhead.