



Thickspike Wheatgrass

THICKSPIKE WHEATGRASS (*Agropyro dasystachyum* or *Elymus lanceo Latus*) is widely distributed native sod grass in the northern part of the intermountain region and northern Great Plains. It is a long lived cool season grass with an extensive rhizomous root system combined with a few deep roots. Thickspike Wheatgrass grows up to 3 feet tall, with long, narrow, deep green leaves.

Thickspike Wheatgrass is closely related to Western Wheatgrass but is more drought tolerant. It has good spring and fall recovery and seedling vigor is good but not equal to that of Intermediate or Pubescent Wheatgrasses.

FACTS ABOUT THICKSPIKE WHEATGRASS:

- **Thickspike Wheatgrass growth is relatively slow in early spring thus making it better adapted to late spring or early summer grazing.**
- **Because of a slower rate of establishment, it does not show good potential for irrigated hay and pasture.**
- **Thickspike Wheatgrass is adapted to areas of 8 or more inches of annual precipitation.**
- **Thickspike wheatgrass is palatable to all classes of livestock and wildlife.**
- **It grows from areas as low as sea level (Great Lakes region) to as high as 10,000 feet in the western Rockies.**
- **Species often associated with Thickspike wheatgrass include: Big Sagebrush, Needlegrass, Sand.**



VARIETY:

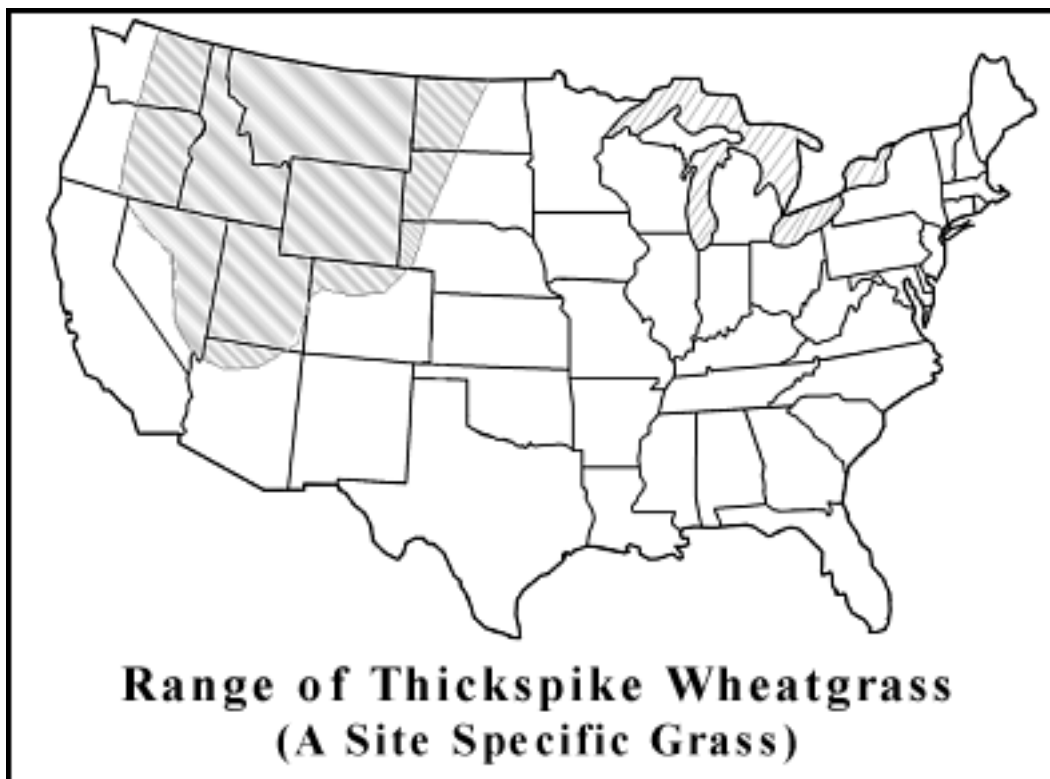
Critana was developed by the Bridger, Montana PMC and released for production in 1971. It is a perennial grass which can be used to vegetate and reduce erosion on disturbed sites such as mined lands, roadsides, recreation areas and construction sites. It is excellent for reseeding range sites that are severely eroded or have low fertility.

Critana is strongly rhizomous and grows to a height of 10 to 12 inches on good sites. It is extremely drought tolerant with excellent seedling vigor. Critana is adapted to medium to coarse-textured soils, and soils derived from granulated shales and clays. It grows best in the 10 to 20 inch precipitation zones, up to 7,500 feet.

ESTABLISHMENT / MANAGEMENT

This species should be seeded with a grain drill at a depth of 1/2 inch on fine soils to 1 inch on coarser soils. A seeding rate of 4 to 6 lbs. PLS/acre is recommended. If seeding into rangeland the rate should be adjusted to 2to 3 lbs. PLS/acre. On mined lands or other disturbed sites, the rate should be increased to 8to 12 lbs. PLS/acre. The best seeding results occur from seeding in the early spring or late fall depending on moisture available. Thickspike Wheatgrass greens up in spring about 3 weeks before Western Wheatgrass. Mulching and light irrigation are beneficial to stand establishment.

Stands of Thickspike wheatgrass should not be grazed until they are firmly established and have headed out. Once established, it is a low maintenance plant requiring little additional treatment or care. Stands sometimes become sodbound in 3 to 5 years requiring some form of fertilization and alteration of grazing patterns. New stands may be damaged by grasshoppers, or stressed by weeds. Herbicides should not be applied however, until the four leaf stage is reached.



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