

Fact Sheet

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Western Wheatgrass

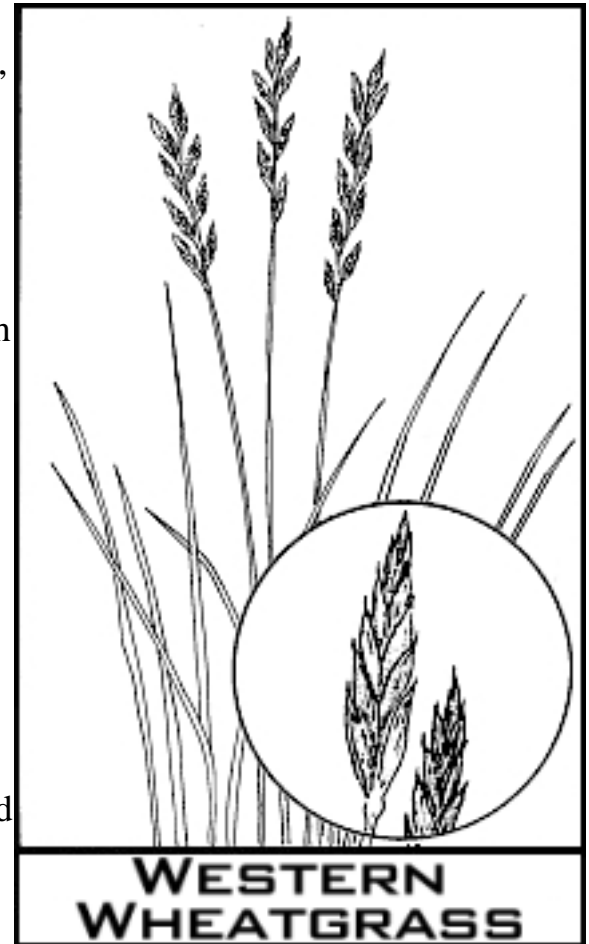
WESTERN WHEATGRASS is a native, cool-season, perennial, sod-forming grass. It reaches a height of 1 to 3 feet, and because of its bluish-colored stems and leaves, it is often called **Bluestem Wheatgrass**.

DESCRIPTION:

Western Wheatgrass is a tenacious, dry range type of native grass. It is considered to be a comparatively harsh grass which makes good spring grazing for several weeks before it becomes stemmy and unpalatable. Cattle like it and do well on it, if not offered other grasses.

ADAPTATIONS:

Western Wheatgrass is saline or alkaline tolerant, but does not do well on light, drysand. It grows best in areas that receive between 14 to 35 inches of precipitation yearly. It occurs most frequently on moderately fine textured soils in low areas where runoff water has pooled and salts have accumulated. It is also found on well drained upland sites and will grow through thick layers of silt. **Western Wheatgrass** will tolerate short periods of flooding and also endure long periods of drought.



USES:

Western Wheatgrass is a moderately productive, fairly nutritious grass that is considered to be of good value as summer and winter forage for livestock. It is also utilized by some species of ruminant wildlife. The primary use of **Western Wheatgrass** has been in erosion control, where it is used to seed waterways, terraces, and streambanks. Its vigorous, sod-forming habits, plus its silt tolerance make it valuable for these purposes. Reclamation areas are often seeded with **Western Wheatgrass**, with its popularity growing as its outstanding qualities are recognized.

VARIETIES:

Arriba is a cool-season, seed forming, perennial grass. It occurs naturally on loam to clay soils at elevations from 3,500 to 10,500 feet.

Flintlock is a forage variety that is both winter hardy and drought tolerant. Widely used by conservationists its sod is deep, helping it survive in areas requiring drought tolerant plants. It is used for dry land hay production and vegetative cover on roadsides and in parks.

Barton was developed cooperatively by the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station and the Soil Conservation Service. Originating from a field collection. it is a plant which forms rhizomes and also a leafy growth for forage. It can be used for pasture, hay and range seedings, alone or in mixtures with other grasses. It has also been used for conservation plantings.

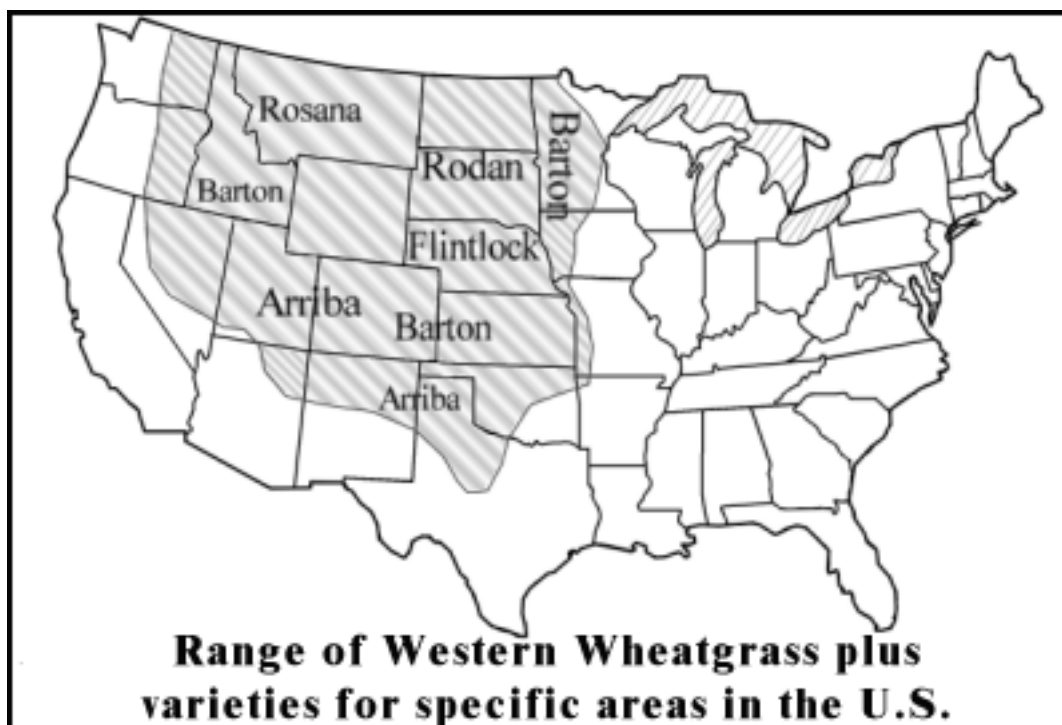
Rodan was released by the Plant Materials Station and the Agricultural Research Station at Bismarck and Mandar, North Dakota. It is strongly rhizomous. which allows for fight sod to form even under dry land conditions. Rodan is particularly well suited for North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana and is winter hardy and drought tolerant.

Rosana was developed in Montana and Wyoming. Seedling vigor makes Rosana valuable for mine spoils reclamation. Adapted to areas of 12 or more inches of precipitation, it does well on the rolling hills of the northern slopes of the Rocky Mountains.

Native is a cool-season, sod-forming grass that is widely used for pastures and hay. It is excellent for erosion control, but is slow to develop from seed. Native **Western Wheatgrass** is drought resistant and moderately tolerant to an alkaline soil.

ESTABLISHMENT / MANAGEMENT

Grazing on **Western Wheatgrass** should be on a rotation system. Heavy grazing will be tolerated, but production will be lowered considerably by this practice. It cures well and can be used for winter forage. **Western Wheatgrass** can grow in pure sands, but more often is found mixed with other grasses.



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