

Plants for Solving Resource Problems

'GOLDAR' BLUEBUNCH WHEATGRASS

Species: *Pseudoroegneria spicata*
 Common Name: Bluebunch Wheatgrass
 Plant Symbol: PSSPS
 Accession Number: PI-539873

Source: Goldar is a selection from a native plant collection made in Asotin County, Washington in 1934. The collection site was on a ponderosa pine-grassland plant community at an elevation of about 4000 feet above sea level. Detailed collection site information is not available.

Native Site Information: Bluebunch wheatgrass is a perennial cool season bunchgrass native throughout the western U.S. Its natural distribution ranges from Alaska to northern California and New Mexico where annual precipitation averages 10 inches or more.

Method of Selection: Goldar was selected for superior total yield and basal area, superior stand, vigor and seed production in comparison with 'Whitmar' beardless wheatgrass and 'Secar' Snake River wheatgrass. It is particularly well adapted to areas above 12 inches annual precipitation and elevations greater than 3,300 feet elevation. It has been compared to more than 1000 accessions of bluebunch wheatgrass at the Aberdeen and Pullman, WA Plant Materials Centers.

Description: Goldar is a densely tufted bunchgrass with abundant leaves. Seed spikes are typically open and lemma awns are strongly divergent at maturity. Abundant leaves and culms average 24 to 39 inches



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tall. Spikes are generally loose and open with spikelets about the same length as the rachis internodes at maturity. Plants are diploid, $2N = 14$.

Use: Goldar bluebunch wheatgrass can be used as a component of a seed mix for rangeland, erosion control, forage and cover seedings in 12 to 20 inch rainfall zones; mine spoil reclamation; critical area stabilization; and competition with aggressive annuals such as cheatgrass and medusahead.

Insect and Disease Problems: No detrimental disease symptoms or insect problems have been observed in plantings of Goldar. It is susceptible to stripe rust and mildew if conditions are favorable for these pathogens.

Environmental Considerations: This variety release is from a species native to the Intermountain West and has no known negative impacts on wild or domestic animals. Goldar is not considered a weedy or invasive species but can spread to adjoining vegetative communities under ideal environmental conditions.

Area of Adaptation: Goldar is adapted to the Northwest and Intermountain regions of the United States where annual precipitation averages above 12 inches and elevation above 3300 feet.

Soil Adaptation: Goldar prefers medium to coarse-textured soils over 10 inches deep, but can also grow on sandy and clayey soils.

Planting and Harvesting: Goldar should be seeded with a drill to a depth of 1/2 to 3/4 inches on a firm, weed-free seedbed. The full seeding rate is 7 pounds Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre. When used as a component of a seed mix, adjust to the percent of mix desired. For seed production, Goldar should be seeded in 36 inch rows at a rate of 3 to 4 pounds PLS per acre to allow mechanical weed control and to maintain rows. Goldar may be seeded during the spring or late fall (dormant). Mid-August to early fall seedings should only be performed if irrigation is available to ensure stand establishment.

Harvesting seed is best accomplished by swathing, followed by combining of the cured windrows. The seed readily shatters, requiring close scrutiny of maturing stands. Seed is generally harvested in late-July to early August. Seed yields range from 80 pounds per acre (dryland) to 170 pounds per acre (irrigated).

Seed Maintenance: Breeder and Foundation seed is maintained at:

USDA-NRCS, Aberdeen PMC
P.O. Box 296
1691A S. 2700 W.
Aberdeen, ID 83210
Phone: (208) 397-4133

Foundation seed is available through the University of Idaho Foundation Seed Program and Utah Crop Improvement Association and Soil Conservation Districts in Idaho, Utah and Nevada. Certification of seed shall be limited to not more than two generations from Foundation seed (Registered and Certified).

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