

# Plants for Solving Resource Problems

## 'SODAR' STREAMBANK WHEATGRASS

**S**pecies: *Elymus lanceolatus*  
*ssp. lanceolatus*  
 Common Name: Streambank  
 Wheatgrass  
 Plant Symbol: ELLAL  
 Accession Number: PI-421021

**Source:** Sodar streambank wheatgrass was collected near Canyon City, Grant County, Oregon in a 12 inch annual precipitation zone at approximately 3,000 feet elevation. Specific collection site information is not available.

**Native Site Information:** Streambank wheatgrass is native to the western United States and is adapted to areas where annual precipitation averages 8 inches or more.

**Method of Selection:** Sodar was compared with 10 other streambank wheatgrass accessions and was improved by mass selection and elimination of off-types during several generations at the NRCS Aberdeen Plant Materials Center. It was released in 1954 by the Aberdeen, ID and Pullman, WA Plant Materials Centers and the University of Idaho and Washington State University Agricultural Experiment Stations.

**Description:** Sodar is a long-lived, cool season perennial grass. It is strongly rhizomatous, with moderate sod-producing qualities. The stems are erect, 12 to 18 inches tall (up to 30 inches irrigated). The leaves, stems, and seedheads have no pubescence. Leaves are short and narrow with a pale green to bluish cast.



**'Sodar' Streambank  
Wheatgrass**

**Anticipated Use:** The uses of Sodar streambank wheatgrass are as a component of a seed mix for erosion control and cover seedings in 8 to 16 inch rainfall zones; mine spoil reclamation; critical area stabilization where a sod-forming perennial grass is needed; filter strips to trap sediment; and competition with aggressive annuals such as cheatgrass and medusahead because of its ability to establish a vigorous sod. It is not recommended for or well suited for forage production.

**Insect and Disease Problems:** No detrimental disease symptoms or insect problems have been observed in plantings of Sodar.

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

**Area of Adaptation:** Sodar is adapted to the Northwest and Intermountain regions of the United States where annual precipitation averages above 8 inches. Sodar has been successfully established on some sites that receive as little as 6 inches of annual precipitation.

**Potential Soil Adaptation:** Sodar prefers moderately deep, loamy to silt loam soils, but can grow on sandy and clayey soils.

**Planting and Harvesting:** Sodar should be seeded with a drill to a depth of 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep on a firm, weed-free seedbed. The full seeding rate is 6 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, Sodar should be seeded in 36 inch rows at 2.9 pounds PLS per acre to allow mechanical weed control and to maintain rows. Sodar may be seeded during the spring, late summer (irrigated), or fall (dormant).

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 mid-July to early August. Seed yields range from 100 pounds per acre (dryland) to 400 pounds per acre (irrigated). Because of its strong rhizomatous nature, seed yields drop dramatically after the second year of harvest.

Seed crops are generally only harvested 2 years.

**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, 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.

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