

# Plants for Solving Resource Problems

## 'MAGNAR' BASIN WILDRYE

**S**pecies: *Leymus cinereus*  
Common Name: Basin Wildrye

Plant Symbol: LEC14  
Accession Number: PI-469229

**Source:** Parent material of Magnar was originally received from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada in 1939. Detailed collection site information is not available.

**Native Site Information:** Basin wildrye is a perennial cool season bunchgrass native to the western Great Plains and Intermountain regions of the United States and Canada. It can be found at elevations from 2000 to 9000 feet. It grows best in areas with annual precipitation of 8 to above 20 inches.

**Method of Selection:** Magnar was first selected as having potential use at the Pullman, WA Plant Materials Center and was further evaluated at the Aberdeen Plant Materials Center by selection of vigorous types during several generations. It also was consistently superior to many other accessions in the production of viable seed.

**Description:** Magnar is a hardy, robust, long-lived native perennial bunch grass. Culms are numerous, erect and stout, ranging from 3 to 8 feet tall depending on the site. Short, thick rhizomes are present in some plants. Blades are generally blue-green in color, firm, flat, cauline, up to 1 inch wide, and up to 30 inches in length. Large, erect seed heads range from 4 to 12 inches in length.



**'Magnar'**  
**Basin Wildrye**

**Use:** Magnar basin wildrye 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; and critical area stabilization.

**Insect and Disease Problems:** No detrimental disease symptoms or insect problems have been observed in plantings of Magnar. Ergot has been occasionally observed on basin wildrye and it is susceptible to leaf and stem rust in wetter climatic areas.

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

**Area of Adaptation:** Magnar is adapted to the western Great Plains and Intermountain regions of the United States and Canada at elevations from 2000 to 9000 feet. It grows best in areas with annual precipitation of 8 to above 16 inches.

**Soil Adaptation:** Magnar has a broad soil texture adaptation. It is not recommended for use on shallow soils or coarse textured, deep sands. It has some tolerance to saline and sodic soil conditions and will withstand a relatively high water table but will not tolerate extended periods of inundation.

**Planting and Harvesting:** Magnar should be seeded with a drill to a depth of 1/2 to 3/4 inch 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, Magnar 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. Magnar 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 direct combining with the platform set high to get most of the seed and as little vegetative growth as possible. The seed shatters readily, requiring close scrutiny of maturing stands. Seed is generally harvested in late-July to early August. Seed yields range from 150 pounds per acre (dryland) to 350 pounds per acre (irrigated). The tall stubble should be removed as soon as possible following harvest. Stubble should never be burned because the fire is usually too hot and can severely damage the crown of the plant,

resulting in reduced seed production and possible loss of the stand.

**Seed Maintenance:** Breeder and Foundation seed is maintained at:

USDA-NRCS, Aberdeen PMC  
P.O. Box 296  
1691A South 2700 West  
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).

November 2006



The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, Political beliefs and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET CENTER at (202) 720-2791.

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250, or call 1-800-245-6340 (voice) or (202) 720-1127(TDD).  
USDA is an equal opportunity employer.