



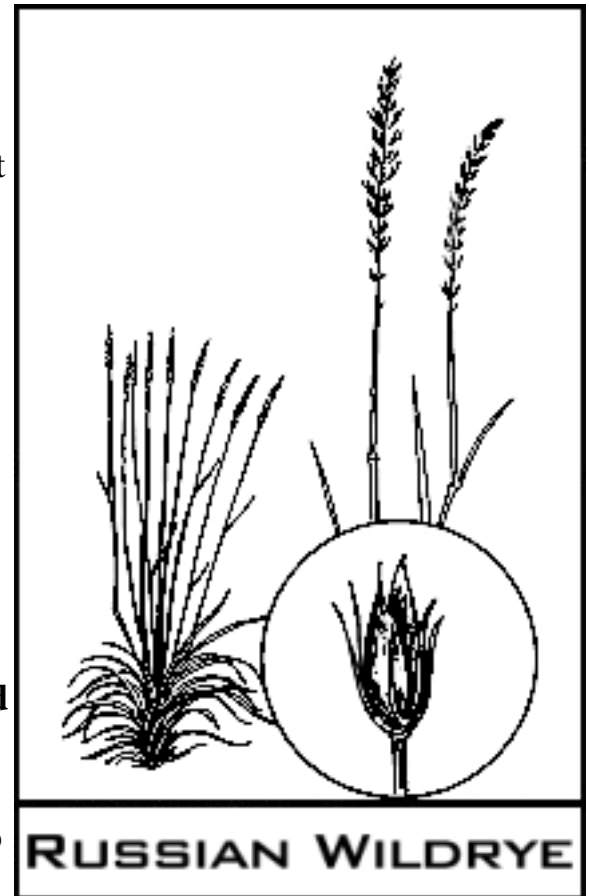
Russian Wildrye

RUSSIAN WILDRYE (*Psathyrostachys(Elymus)junea*) is an introduced cool-season bunchgrass. The original seeds were brought to the United States from Siberia in 1927.

Russian Wildrye is a large cross-fertilized grass growing from 2 to 4 feet in height. Plant color varies from dark to light green with leafy, nutritious, dense basal leaves. The plant is deep rooted, drought resistant and salt tolerant. The head is a dense spike with seed that shatters readily when mature. Germination is rapid and often exceeds 90% under favorable conditions.

FACTS ABOUT RUSSIAN WILDRYE:

- **Russian Wildrye is best adapted to silty and clayey soils of high fertility with more summer than winter moisture.**
- **Stands may be slow to establish but once established, Russian Wildrye stands are longer-lived and more drought resistant than are the crested wheatgrasses.**
- **It grows best with annual precipitation between 8 to 18 inches.**
- **It grows from 4,000 to 9,000 feet in elevation.**
- **Russian Wildrye resumes spring growth early and matures earlier than most wheatgrasses.**
- **Nutritive qualities are excellent throughout the season because of its high digestibility and fairly constant protein level.**
- **Palatability is good. It provides some winter grazing in warmer climates.**
- **Russian Wildrye makes rapid regrowth when grazed and responds quickly to summer rains.**



VARIETIES:

Vinall is a synthetic of five clones chosen for release because of improved seed production and forage yields.

Sawki was released for production by the Canada Department of Agriculture. It is noted for its adaptation to loam and clay soils and its salt tolerance.

Swift and several other varieties have been developed and released. These other varieties are more resistant to leaf-spot diseases, such as leaf rust, spot blotch and leaf blight.

Bozoisky Select is an improved cultivar that was selected for improved vegetative vigor, leafiness, seed yield and seedling vigor. It is extremely winter hardy.

ESTABLISHMENT / MANAGEMENT

Seedlings of **Russian Wildrye** are slow to develop. More vigorous grasses may tend to dominate the initial stand if planted in mixed stands. Therefore, a firm seedbed free from competing plants is essential to establishment. The seed to soil contact is important. Place seed deep enough to ensure that adequate moisture is available, but not so deep as to result in partial stand failure (never deeper than 3/4 inch). A press wheel drill should be used for seeding because it places the seed in closer contact with moist soil than other types of drills. The drill should be equipped with a seed agitator to keep the seed flowing evenly through the cups. Broadcasting of is usually not a satisfactory method of obtaining viable stands. Recommended seeding rates are 8 to 10 lbs. PLS/acre on droughty sites and 10 to 12 lbs. PLS on more favorable 5it55. Seed should be drilled in rows from 10 to 12 inches apart. An 16 inch spacing is recommended when soil moisture is limited (8 to 10 inches of annual precipitation).

Range seedings can be made in early spring (before mid April) or late fall (after November 1). Adequate soil moisture is especially critical at these times. Fall seedings should be done late enough so germination and seedling emergence are delayed until spring when temperature and moisture conditions are more favorable. Delay grazing at least one year after seedling emergence to permit stands to become established.

Herbicides can be used for weed control. Follow the manufacturers instructions carefully, using only the lowest rate required. After the first year it may be necessary to apply nitrogen fertilizer to maintain production. It should be applied in late fall or early spring at rates of 30 to 40 lbs./acre.

The sod should not be torn up or disced up as a method of increasing production of old stands. Thinning the stands may result in severe soil erosion.



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