

## ARIZONA FESCUE

*Festuca arizonica*



### ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION

Native to the ponderosa pine zone from Colorado, south to west Texas, Mexico and Nevada. A long-lived, perennial, cool season bunchgrass. Culms are densely tufted in large bunches, 1 to 3' tall. Numerous fine basal leaves. Seed head narrow, 3 to 6" long panicle. Has a dense, coarse, fibrous root system. Similar to Idaho fescue.

### GROWTH HABITS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

Found on shallow clay loam to loam and sandy to gravelly soils. Does not tolerate high pH calcareous soils. It is common in the ponderosa pine zone from 6,000 to 10,000' elevation. Commonly associated with mountain muhly. Larger plants have lemmas with shorter awn tips. It has a cool season growth habit, but may make only a little spring growth due to a dry season. Matures late summer with little fall regrowth. Seedlings develop usually limited in native habitats.

### CULTURE

Propagation by seed. Plant seed 1/4 - 1/2" deep on coarse textured soils and 1/4" or shallower on fine-textured soils. Better stands obtained on firm seedbed. Drill a minimum of 2 to 5 lbs. PLS per acre. Increase rate 50 - 100% for harsh sites, south, west, or steep exposures, poorer seedbeds, and when broadcasting. Seedling vigor only fair. Stands do not develop until the second or third year. Mulch on steep slopes and highly erosive sites. Seed in early spring at lower altitudes with reliable moisture and late fall with uncertain moisture and at lower mountain elevations. Seed in spring as early as possible, at higher mountain elevations.

### USE AND MANAGEMENT

Because of heavy root system, it is an excellent soil binder. Suited for revegetating and stabilizing disturbed soils, road, ski slopes and construction in the mountains. Moderately palatable, can be used for forage and range land restoration. Has moderate grazing tolerance and remains at least partly green from spring through fall only. Fair tolerance of wildfires.

### IMPROVED VARIETIES

'Redondo' released from New Mexico.

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