

# PRAIRIE JUNEGRASS

*Koeleria cristata*



## ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION

Native to U.S. Ranges from southern Canada to Texas, California, and Washington. The only species of *Koeleria* native to western North America. Slender, cool-season, tufted perennial bunchgrass. Plants seldom over 1 to 2.5' tall with narrow spikelike heads 2 to 7" long. Sometimes with short awns.

## GROWTH HABITS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

Although rarely forms pure stands it is found at mid ranges widely spread over a variety of dry to moist soils. Adapted to wide spectrum of sandy to clayey soils, but tolerant of gravelly or

rocky sites. Most characteristic of sandy or clay loam with 16 to 20" ppt. Also found near springs as well as on dry rocky ridges. Occurs throughout the sagebrush, aspen, ponderosa pine, and lodgepole pine zones. Often grows in open woodlands and ponderosa pine at 5,000 to 10,000' elevation and is an important forage grass in open timber types. Some drought resistance and good winter hardiness.

## CULTURE

Plant 1/4 - 1/2" deep on fine-textured soils and up to 3/4" deep on coarse textured soils. Firm seedbed desired. Seed into non-volunteering crop, stubble or mulch needed on eroded sites. Plant 0.5 to 1.0 lbs. PLS per acre and increase seeding rate if broadcasting on bare or harsher sites or for denser, early stands. Seeding dates vary to fall dormant or early to mid spring in high country, and early July in southern summer rainfall zones. Use dormant fall seeding if soils have to be tilled before planting. New seedings, particularly with summer planting, require weed control by herbicides or mowing,

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Used for revegetation on rangeland, mine lands, construction activities, for brush control and after fires. Good forage early in the season, matures relatively early on much of its range. This may explain why it is usually not over grazed late in the season. Can be used in mixtures for conservation work on eroding fields, depleted ranges, and bare-eroding and disturbed fields. Graze moderately, leave 3 to 6" of stubble to maintain stands. Depleted rangeland may need summer deferment. Should be allowed to mature as a seed crop occasionally.

## IMPROVED VARIETIES

None listed for Region.

Pawnee Buttes Seed Inc.

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