

FOXTAIL BARLEY

Hordeum jubatum L.



Biology:

Foxtail barley is a simple perennial weed, reproducing only by seeds. The stems which are greenish-purple in colour, are typical round hollow grass stems, 1-2 ft. tall with swollen nodes and exist as a bunch grass from a mass of fibrous roots. The leaves are rough, greyish-green and predominantly ribbed. The flowers are dense, unbranched, nodding spikes, 5-12 cm long, with a "foxtail" of awns. At maturity the awns fade to straw colour or almost white. The seeds are a yellow caryopsis with very long awns, up to 7.5. This weed is a prolific seed producer. Seeds can be dispersed a great distance by wind.

Scouting Techniques:

Take a minimum of 20 weed counts across the field. Scout frequently after periods of high temperatures because this weed thrives under those conditions. Also scout saline areas, foxtail barley is resilient to high salinity. A particular problem in reduced tillage and direct seeding systems.

Effects on Crop Quality:

This weed, because it harbors wheat rust and blackstem rust, can indirectly affect the development of field crops.

Control:

- Cut for hay before seed forms
- Seed pasture with competitive grass
- Early spring grazing causes a set back
- Control water level in low lying areas to prevent salinity increase

Chemical:

- Group 3 (Kerb 50-w)
- Group 22 (Gramoxone)