

## Seed Availability

Foundation seed of Secar is available through the Washington State Crop Improvement Association. Seed growers interested in producing Certified Secar seed need to apply for Foundation seed through the Washington State Crop Improvement Association. They also need to apply with the Washington State Department of Agriculture which will determine if the field meets isolation distance requirements and previous crop requirements. A registered class is not recognized for Secar. Certified seed is available through many private seed companies. Breeder seed is maintained by the Pullman Plant Materials Center.



*Secar is normally swathed before combine harvesting. The seed will be stored in boxes until it is ready to be de-awned and cleaned.*

## For More Information

Visit our Plant Materials Web site at <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

### USDA NRCS

Pullman Plant Materials Center  
P.O. Box 646211  
Pullman WA 99164-6211  
Phone: (509) 335-6892  
Fax: (509) 335-2940

Or

### WSCIA Foundation Seed Program

P.O. Box 646420  
Pullman WA 99164-6420  
Phone: (509) 335-4365

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## 'Secar' Snake River Wheatgrass



**A quality conservation plant  
developed by the USDA NRCS  
Pullman Plant Materials Center,  
Pullman, Washington**

*Helping People Help the Land*

# 'Secar' Snake River Wheatgrass

'Secar' (*Elymus wawawaiensis*) is a Snake River wheatgrass selection that originates from a seed collection made near Lewiston, Idaho.

The name was selected to reflect drought tolerance; Seca, in Spanish, means dry. Snake River wheatgrass and bluebunch wheatgrass are very similar in appearance. Snake River Wheatgrass naturally occupies the canyons of the Snake River in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Bluebunch wheatgrass is much more widely distributed. Secar is a densely tufted bunchgrass with abundant, narrow leaves, numerous fine stems, and small seeds with divergent awns. It is early maturing, drought tolerant, and persistent under adverse conditions.

## Uses

The primary uses of Secar Snake River wheatgrass include:

- Rangeland seedings
- Critical area stabilization
- Cropland retirement
- Mine spoil reclamation
- Upland wildlife habitat

## Description

Secar attains a stem height of 16-32 inches. The stems are fine and smooth. The leaves are

basal and range in length from 12-16 inches. The seeds are between ½ and ¾ inches in length with bent ¾ inch awns. There are approximately 139,000 seeds per pound. The recruitment from shattered seed is fair to poor, and the longevity is 30+ years.

## Adaptation

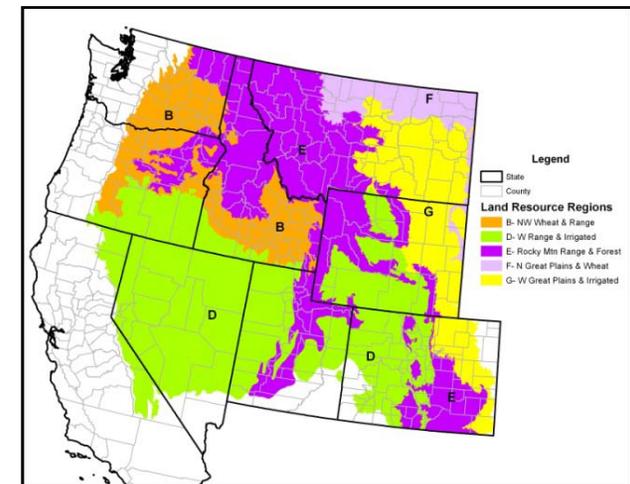
Secar is adapted to low rainfall areas of 8-14 inches. It performs best on deep, well-drained soils and should not be seeded to saline lowlands, wet meadows, or densely forested areas. Secar has performed better than Whitmar beardless wheatgrass and Goldar bluebunch wheatgrass in nearly every test planting on sites that receive less than 14 inches of annual rainfall. It performs similarly to Anatone bluebunch wheatgrass and P7 bluebunch wheatgrass in plantings that receive 7-10 inches of annual rainfall. Production of Secar is typically between 400 and 2,000 pounds per acre. Sites that receive 10 inches of annual rainfall will yield 900-1,200 pounds per acre. Crested wheatgrass, for comparison, will yield similarly. It has persisted for over 30 years in a test planting at the Lind Dryland Experiment Station. CRP burn studies conducted in central Washington indicate that late summer fires have little adverse impact on Secar. Cheatgrass competes rigorously with Secar seedlings so cheatgrass must be controlled prior to seeding Secar. Once established, Secar will grow amongst cheatgrass. Annual broadleaf weeds such as

prickly lettuce and Russian thistle are less of a problem during the establishment of Secar. Perennial broadleaf weeds such as; Canadian thistle and leafy spurge must be controlled. If not controlled, they will severely impact Secar biomass (forage).

## Establishment

Secar should not be grown in areas that are subject to heavy, spring-summer grazing usage. Secar can be seeded alone or with understory grasses such as Big bluegrass, Sandburg bluegrass, Idaho fescue, and Prairie junegrass. It also can be sown with forbs and legumes.

## Proposed Use Areas



*Secar grows well throughout most of the western states. The shaded areas are the primary areas for its intended use.*