

Plant Name: Blue Grama

Scientific name:

Bouteloua gracilis (Willd. Ex Kunth.) Lag. Ex Griffiths

Short Description:

Blue Grama is a native, perennial, warm-season, short grass that seldom grows taller than 12 to 20 inches.

Description:

Blue Grama is a native, perennial, warm-season, short grass that seldom grows taller than 12 to 20 inches. Blue Grama reproduces only by seed, and as the seed heads mature, they usually bend into a curve that resembles a human eyebrow. It produces a low basal type growth that forms a bunchy sod. Blue Grama is grown throughout the Great Plains, and is found in association with buffalograss in the short grass prairies. It is more drought resistant and tolerates alkali conditions better than Sideoats Grama. Blue Grama produces highly palatable, nutritious forage that retains its feed value into the winter. Blue Grama does not produce an abundance of forage, and should not be grazed closer than 2 to 3 inches during the growing season



Taxonomic Classification:

Blue Grama

Kingdom	Plantae
Subkingdom	Tracheobionta
Superdivision	Spermatophyta
Division	Magnoliophyta
Class	Lillosidea
Subclass	Commelinidae
Order	Cyperales
Family	Poaceae
Genus	<i>Bouteloua</i>
Species	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i> (Willd. Ex Kunth.) Lag. Ex Griffiths

Plant Characteristics:

Height:	12 -20 inches
Growth habit:	bunchgrass
Bloom period:	summer
Sun requirement:	full sun
Leaf foliage color:	gray-green
Seeds per pound:	750,000
Minimum soil temperature for germination:	50 to 55 F°
Soil pH range:	6.6 to 8.4
Planting Rate:	2 to 4 PLS lbs/acre
Planting Depth:	¼ to ½ inch
Planting season:	March to May

Use:

Erosion control: Blue grama is an excellent choice for erosion control when used as a component in warm season grasses mixes in the short- grass regions of the country. Blue grama has been used as a low-maintenance turfgrass as well as surface revegetation following mining operations.

Livestock:

In southern areas of the U.S. blue grama is primarily a bunchgrass. Under heavy grazing and in more northern states it can form a sod.

Commercially Available Cultivars:

'Lovington' (AES from New Mexico in 1963)

'Hachita' (Plant Materials Center release from New Mexico in 1980)

'Alma' (Cooperative release from Plant Materials Center in New Mexico and the Colorado and New Mexico AES's in 1992)