



# CHEATGRASS

## (DOWNY BROME)

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Bromus tectorum*

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?:** This aggressive winter annual (seeds usually germinate in late winter) is often known as downy brome. The seedlings are bright green and have hairy leaves. The stems are upright and slender and may also be slightly hairy. The stem tips, where the seeds are located, droop slightly.

This grass has an overall fine, soft appearance and typically grows 3 inches to 2 feet tall. As this grass dries out it begins to turn a purplish color. Plants dry to a straw color by early summer.

**WHERE DOES IT LIKE TO GROW?:** This invasive grass likes to grow in rangelands, cultivated fields, abandoned or overgrazed pastures and even in a city garden.



**HOW DOES IT SPREAD?:** This plant reproduces only by seed. Seeds are scattered by the wind, by animals (it sticks to their fur) and by man (sticks to shoelaces and to socks).



**HOW DO I CONTROL IT?:** Cheatgrass usually grows in disturbed areas stopping native plants from returning to the area. Once this plant is dry, it increases the chance of fire. Management of this plant is aimed at replacing cheatgrass with a permanent plant cover.

### NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL:

- Do not disturb the soil if you can prevent it (tilling, digging).
- Plant perennial grasses to help shade out the cheatgrass. Grasses such as crested wheat compete well with cheatgrass.
- Mowing or cutting is not recommended.
- Burning is not recommended. If the infestation is small, hand pulling can be effective.
- Sheep, goats and cattle will graze cheatgrass. Grazing can begin when the plants are green and before they turn purple.



### CHEMICAL CONTROL:

- Late fall or early spring are the best times to control cheatgrass with herbicides. For specific recommendations, please contact your County Extension agent or the Noxious Weed Control Office.

**NOTE:** This weedy grass is not on the Idaho State or the Kootenai County weed list.

**Want more information?**

**Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control**  
**10905 N. Ramsey Road**  
**Hayden, ID 83835**  
**208-446-1290 / TTY 208-446-2145**  
**kcnoxiousweeds@kcgov.us or [www.kcweeds.com](http://www.kcweeds.com)**

*Kootenai County does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment in, its public meetings, programs, or activities. Requests for assistance or accommodations can be arranged by contacting the Noxious Weed Control Department at (208) 446-1290 or County Administration Office TTY (208) 446-2145 with 3 days advance notice.*