

War on Weeds – Weeds are Everybody’s Problem

THE ISSUE: Jointed Goatgrass

Jointed goatgrass (*Aegilops cylindrica*) is a winter annual grass, native to western Europe and southern Asia. It was most likely introduced into the United States as a contaminate in winter wheat seed. This grass species is closely related to wheat, when young it is difficult to distinguish between the two. Jointed goatgrass easily invades cereal grain cropping systems, especially when crop rotation options are limited.

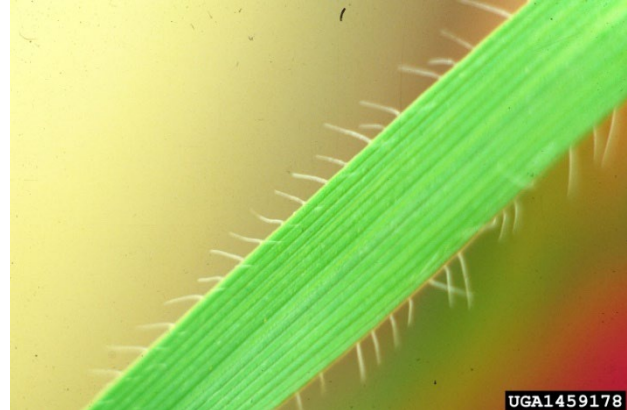


Photo courtesy of Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org

Jointed goatgrass leaves are up to a ½ inch wide, up to 6 inches long, and have fine hairs evenly spaced along the edges. The foliage is deep blue green in color. Prior to seed production plants lay close to the ground. Seeds are produced on cylindrical spikes that are tapered towards the top. It gets its name from the “jointed” appearance of the spike. When the seed head reaches maturity, it breaks into segments. Jointed goatgrass is a major contaminate of wheat, the seeds are about the same size and weight making them difficult to separate.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Options:

- Prevention – Learn to identify this plant. Never transport unknown plant material. Always plant clean seed!
- Mechanical – A moldboard plow can effectively bury seeds, but it can also bring other seeds to the surface. Mowing roadsides and no-crop areas before seed is produced can limit seed production.
- Cultural – Incorporating a broadleaf crop in the crop rotation is an effective way to reduce the jointed goatgrass population.
- Chemical – Glyphosate and other non-selective herbicides can be used during fallow years or after harvest. Once wheat has emerged there are not a lot of options unless a Clearfield variety has been planted. Clearfield varieties are resistant to the herbicide Imazamox (Beyond), allowing jointed goatgrass to be sprayed without harming the crop. **Always read and follow herbicide label directions.**

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