

'Alkar' TALL WHEATGRASS

Scientific Name: Thinopyrum ponicum

Common Name: Tall wheatgrass

Cultivar Name: 'Alkar'

Selected By: Pullman PMC, USDA-NRCS

Release Cooperators: USDA-SCS, Washington State University Agricultural Experiment Station, Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station

Release Date: 1951

ORIGIN: 'Alkar' tall wheatgrass was developed by the SCS U.S Department of Agriculture, released in 1951, and named in 1958 in cooperation with the Washington, Idaho and Oregon Ag Experiment Stations. It was isolated after several generations of selections from PI-98,526 introduced from the USSR in 1934.

DESCRIPTION: 'Alkar' is a tall, very late maturing, stemmy, bunch-type wheatgrass with coarse, blue-green leaves. Seeds are large with good seedling vigor. It is very tolerant to wet alkaline conditions in semi-arid regions of the West. It is fairly palatable and highly productive on sub-irrigated and irrigated saline and alkali land. It is used to reclaim non-productive saline and alkali lands. When cut for hay, it must be mowed at least 6-8 inches above the ground to maintain good stands.

DISEASE AND INSECT PROBLEMS: No significant problems have been noted.

SEED PRODUCTION: 'Alkar' seed yields averaged 200 pounds per acre.

SEEDING RECOMMENDATIONS: Seed 8 pounds per acre on a firm weed-free seedbed. Plant with a deep furrow drill between August 15 and September 15 or in the early spring.

CONSERVATION USES: Use primarily for pasture but can be used for hay or silage.

AVAILABILITY: For additional information contact: Wayne Crowder, Soil Conservationist, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pullman Plant Materials Center (509) 335-7376 or email crowder@wsu.edu.