

Brome and Brome Seed

Bromus marginatus (mountain brome) *Bromus inermis* (smooth brome)
Bromus biebersteinii (meadow brome) (Gramineae)

Fast Facts: Number of Growers: Brome: 50
Brome seed: 20
Acres in Washington: Brome: 2,000
Brome seed: 500 acres
Per Acre Value: Brome: \$600
Brome seed: \$900

Description Of Crop:

There are over 42 species of *Bromus* in the United States. Some are forages but others are troublesome weeds. As forage it can be used for both livestock and wildlife. Brome is a native cool season grass, with flat leaf blades and open seed heads. It is high in protein compared to other grasses and is a long-lived perennial that can produce for 10 years. It is winter hardy and adapted to a wide range of moistures: rainy, irrigated or dry land areas. In Washington the most common types of brome grown are: meadow brome, mountain brome and smooth brome. Meadow brome is used primarily for forage production such as pasture, hay or haylage. It spreads by short rhizomes and is non invasive. It has awns and hairy leaves and stems. It makes a rapid recovery after mowing or grazing. Mountain brome is a short-lived perennial bunchgrass that grows to a height of 4 ft. Its leaves are up to 12 inches long, and are flat and hairy underneath. It starts growing in early spring and is excellent where rapid cover development is required. It can be seeded with alfalfa or sweet clover but shouldn't be used for permanent pasture. Smooth brome is best adapted to areas of moderate rainfall and cool summer temperatures. It has creeping rhizomes and forms a dense sod. It is a good pasture and hay grass being highly palatable and nutritious. Unlike meadow brome, smooth bromes regrowth is initiated from its crown and does not have rapid recovery or regrowth after grazing or haying.

Production practices and pest problems are similar for brome forage and brome grass seed production.

Key pests:

The main pest of brome is weeds. These include wild oats, cheatgrass, quackgrass, Canada and Russian thistle, windgrass, lambsquarter, shepherdspurse and chickweed. Mountain brome is susceptible to head smut. Insect pests include sod webworm, cutworm, armyworm and thrips.

Key pesticides:

Weeds can be controlled with Clarity, 2, 4-D and MCPA. Head smut can be controlled with fungicidal seed treatments like Captan or with varieties such as "Garnet" which has increased heads smut resistance. Cutworms, armyworms, sod webworms are controlled with Lorban.

Critical pest

Control issues:

Few insecticides are registered on grass seed crops. Growers should use foundation or registered seed available through local Crop Improvement Associations or certified seed from commercial growers. Meadow brome should not be grazed until forage is 8-12 inches since its roots establishes slowly and may be damaged by grazing too soon.

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Location

Of Production:

Clallam, Clark, Jefferson, Skagit, Adams, Benton, Columbia, Grant, Lincoln, Spokane, Walla Walla and Whitman counties.

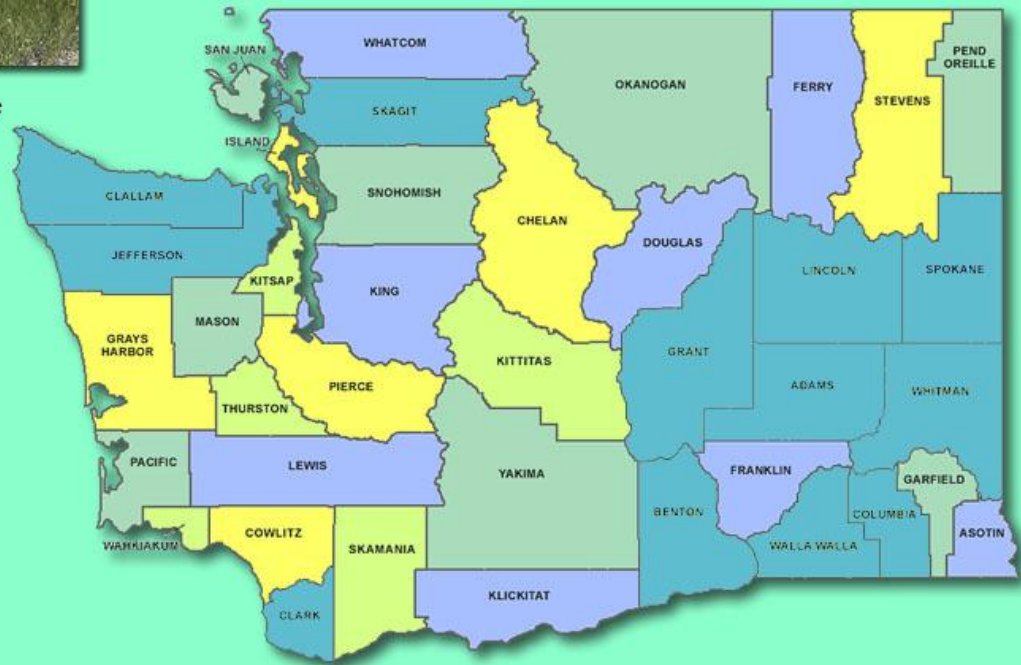


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Brome Production in Washington State



Brome



■ Area of Brome Production