

# Brussels Sprouts Seed

*Bassica oleraceae* (Cruciferae)

## Fast Facts:

Acres in Washington: less than 10 Per Acre Value: \$1,000 Value of Production in WA: \$10,000
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## Description of crop:

Brussels sprouts seed is a biennial crop planted from mid-August to mid-September and harvested the following summer in mid-June or early July. The crop is grown from seedlings transplanted from seed beds to the field. All Brussels sprouts seed grown in Washington is hybrid seed. The crop is hand-hoed to remove weeds and rogued to remove plants not displaying true varietal characteristics. At harvest, the crop is cut, windrowed and dried in the field for 10 to 14 days. After drying, the crop is threshed, and the seed is sent to a conditioning plant, where it is cleaned to 99% purity.

## Key pests:

Severe insect pests include cabbage aphid, turnip aphid, seedpod weevil and cabbage maggot. Other insect pests include cabbage looper, springtails, webworms, diamondback moth, cutworms, symphylans and wireworms. Weed pests include shepherdspurse, mustards, lambsquarter, pigweeds, smartweed, henbit, groundsel, chickweed, wild turnip, quackgrass, wild oat, Canada thistle, bolt thistle, vetch, nightshades and bed straw. Shepherdspurse, groundsel and henbit are the more problematic weeds. Weeds are serious pests due to two issues. The seeds that the weeds produce are often very difficult to sort out of the seed crop. If the contaminating seeds are too costly or impossible to sort out, the seed crop is considerably lowered in value or rendered unmarketable. Weeds also serve as a host for insects and diseases. The most serious diseases are powdery mildew, downy mildew, Alternaria black spot, *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* and bacterial soft rot (latter in early spring in crops with winter injury).

## Key pesticides:

Chlorpyrifos and permethrin are used for insect control, and endosulfan is applied mid-bloom to control seedpod weevil, cabbage maggot, cutworms and loopers. Trifluralin is used on all acreage prior to planting, for control of broadleaf weeds. Fluzifop-butyl is applied occasionally after harvest, for control of grasses. Poast controls grass weeds. Growers reduce inoculum by using long crop rotations to control Alternaria black spot and white mold. Stock seed is treated with mefenoxam and thiram and sometimes fludioxonil to control seedling blights. Iprodione is applied to control Alternaria black spot and white mold. Boscalid and cyprodinil + fludioxonil are also used for white mold and gray mold (for the latter, particularly in spring after any winter injury). Mefenoxam, metalaxyl, and cymoxanil control downy mildew. Azoxystrobin and pyraclostrobin are used to control powdery mildews, Alternaria black spot and white mold. Mancozeb and clorothalonil are used for general disease control.

Due to over-wintering damage, copper hydroxide frequently is applied in late winter or early spring to control bacterial soft rots.

**Critical pest  
control issues:**

The loss of dimethoate use was significant. Mitigation to comply with urbanization, salmon and water buffer issues are expensive. It is critical that growers maintain efficacious and economical herbicides. The profit margin is quite narrow on small seeded vegetable crops. If the margin is reduced by higher weed control costs, higher sorting costs or lower value due to weed seed contamination the result could be economic loss to the grower.

**Expert contacts:**

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**Location**

**of production:** Whatcom and Clallam counties

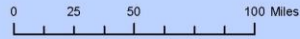


Brussels Sprouts Seed - Clallam County


## Brussels Sprouts Seed Production in Washington State



Deborah Bahs - April 2007



### Counties Producing Brussels Sprouts Seed\*

 30 acres or less

\* Includes only those counties with significant crop acres.  
The crop may also be produced in counties not highlighted on the map.