

# “B” Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant, but may have limited distribution in some counties

**Jointed goatgrass**  
*Aegilops cylindrica*

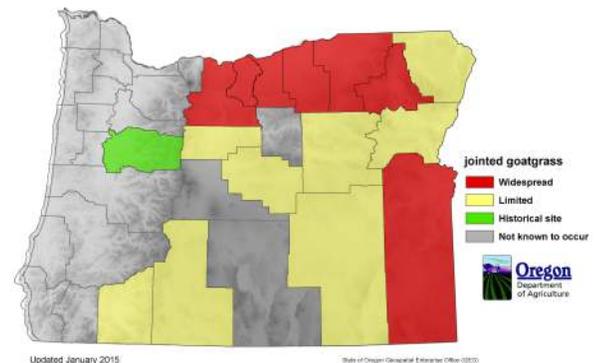
**Other common names:** Goatgrass

**USDA symbol:** AECY  
**ODA rating:** B



**Introduction:** Jointed goatgrass is a native of southern Europe and western Asia. It is closely related to wheat to the degree that both species can interbreed ruining the quality of the wheat for milling. It has been spread as a contaminant in equipment and seed. The first sample of jointed goatgrass was collected in Centerville, Delaware in 1870. It was believed to have brought by the European settlers in contaminated seed.

**Distribution in Oregon:** Jointed goatgrass is primarily a weed of cereal grain production, the majority of which occurs in the Columbia River counties and Malheur County of Eastern Oregon.



**Description:** Jointed goatgrass is a winter annual growing to around 2.5 feet tall. The leaves have a number of visible hairs growing along the edge of the leaf and the foliage is a deep blue-green color. Seed heads (spikes) are cylindrical and narrow and break into individual segments at maturity during the summer months. The spike is made up of a number of spikelets, also called joints. Each joint is about an inch long and contains from one to three seeds that are generally viable for 3 to 5 years.

**Impacts:** Jointed goatgrass grows best in cultivated fields, but it can also invade grasslands. It thrives in wheat fields, rangelands, roadsides, and fencerows. Ten jointed goatgrass plants per square yard can reduce cereal crop yields by 30 to 50%. Jointed goatgrass seed is a contaminant in cereal grain seed crops where it alters their milling characteristics and reduces the value of the grain. Selective rouging in wheat fields can prevent outbreaks of this persistent weed.

**Biological controls:** No approved biological control agents are available.

