

## PLANTING GUIDE

*Bouteloua curtipendula* (Michx.) Torr.

**Common Name:**  
sideoats grama

### Accession Numbers/Releases:

9062278 Zone – 1, Northern Iowa Germplasm

9062279 Zone – 2, Central Iowa Germplasm

9062280 Zone – 3, Southern Iowa Germplasm

### Description:

Sideoats grama is a warm season, perennial, bunchgrass; its short scaly rhizomes rarely form a sod. Leaves are flat, one cm wide and grow perpendicular to the one meter erect rachis. Leaf sheaths, longer than the internodes, are slightly hairy toward the top and ligules bear short hairs. Hairs on the leaf margins grow from glandular bumps. Green leaves frequently have dark spots creating a diseased appearance; lower leaves curl and turn nearly white when dry. Late in the growing season, the entire plant takes on a reddish cast. Oat-like seeds hang from one side of the stem (rachis), hence 'sideoats'.

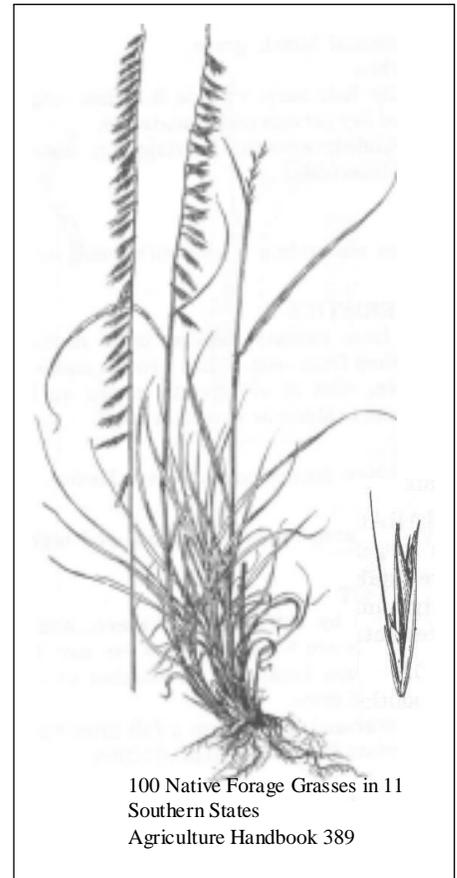
**Purpose:** Sideoats can be used in the following situations: roadside plantings, prairie restoration, prairie landscaping, wildlife cover, and in wildflower gardens because of its attractive fall reddish forage.

**Habitat/Range:** Common throughout the tallgrass region on dry hillsides and in well-drained prairies, often associated with limestone or calcium-rich soil.

**Source:** Seed of these three accessions 9062278, 9062279, and 9062280 were collected from native stands located in the northern (Zone 1), central (Zone 2), and southern (Zone 3), counties in the state of Iowa.

**Establishment (For Seed Production):** Prepare a clean weed free seedbed by disking and harrowing or chemical weed control. Firm the seedbed by cultipacking. Seedbed should be firm enough to allow the seed to be planted ¼ to ½ inch deep when the soil temperature reaches 55 ° Fahrenheit. Sideoats can also be no tilled into sod or crop stubble using appropriate no-till equipment and chemical programs.

Plants are cross-pollinated, so for seed production, to prevent crossing, plant 1,000 feet from other varieties or accessions.



**Fertilizer:** Apply no fertilizer the establishment year unless soil test indicates a low deficiency of less than 15 PPM of phosphorus and or less than 90 PPM of potassium. Use no nitrogen during the establishment year as this can encourage weed competition.

**Seeding Rates (For Seed Production):** Seeding rates for sideoats grama should be and three pounds Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre in 36 inch rows. An average pound of sideoats grama contains approximately 191,000 seeds.

For solid stand production, drill three times the seeding rate of row production to maintain 40 PLS per square foot.

For prairie restoration or diverse plantings for wildlife refer to NRCS Iowa – 327 Conservation Cover Standard that pertains to this species.

**Seeding Dates:** Spring plantings (April-June); fall plantings (November-March).

**Management:** Reduce weed competition by mowing or cultivating between the rows of sideoats grama. For grassy weed control use of a post grass herbicide can provide weed control and will encourage a good stand. Use label recommendations for application.

**Note:** Herbicide products may not be registered on this grass species in your state. NRCS does not endorse the use of any product.

See NRCS Iowa Prescribed Burning Practice Code 338 on burning criteria. Burning may be appropriate where plant vigor declines in native plant species or where invader species threaten a native mix stand.

**Availability of Plant Materials:**

Breeder material is being produced in limited supply by the Plant Materials Center, located at Elsberry, Missouri.

Source identified seed will be released to interested commercial seed growers.

A list of commercial growers can be obtained from the Elsberry Plant Materials Center or the Iowa Crop Improvement Association – The Iowa Seed Directory.

4/24/00

## References

100 Native Forage Grasses in 11 Southern States; p. 59; Leithead, Horace L., Shiflet, Thomas N., and Yarlett, Lewis L.; USDA, Washington, D. C. February 1971.

Wildflowers of the Tallgrass Prairie, The Upper Midwest; p. 227; Runkel, T. Sylvan and roosa, M. Dean; Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa 1989.

Grasses, An Identification Guide; p. 139, Brown, Lauren, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, New York.

Flora of Missouri; p. 182; Steyermark, J. A.; Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa 1968

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