

# Sideoats Grama



## *History*

The Texas Senate resolution that adopted sideoats grama as the official state grass on April 12, 1971, called it "the backbone of the ranching industry" in West Texas. This was proposed by the Texas Council of Chapters of the Soil and Water Conservation Society and the Texas Section Society for Range Management.

Sideoats grama is a native, perennial, warm-season grass. Some strains are strictly bunch-types while others have short, creeping rhizomes. Sideoats grama is long-lived, drought tolerant, and winter hardy.

Many people have described this grass as "beautiful." Its brilliant orange anthers and the reddish-purple flowers it produces when mature, adds color to Texas rangelands. Each oat-like seed turns to one side of the seed stalk when mature, hence the name "sideoats."



## *Adapted Area*

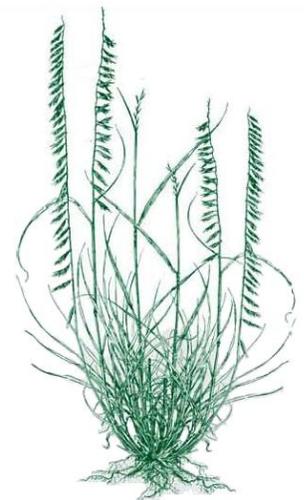
Sideoats grama is adapted to a wide range of soils from sands to clays. It prefers 14- to 25-inches annual precipitation and can grow at elevations up to 8,000 feet. It does best on medium textured soils. It is commonly found growing in association with bluestems.

Sideoats grama tolerates soils that are weakly to moderately saline. It can withstand moderate periods of drought. It can also tolerate moderate spring flooding and semi-shade but is damaged by fire unless it is burned during the dormant season.

## *Establishment*

Work the site as necessary to obtain a firm, weedfree seedbed. Seeds must be in contact with mineral soil for successful establishment. Seed should be planted at a depth of no more than one-fourth inch on fine texture soils and to no more than three-fourths inch on coarse soils. Plant 30 seeds per linear foot of row or 40 seeds per square foot in a block. Plant in the spring after the soil temperature is at least 55 degrees F. Moderate packing to eliminate air space is advised following planting.

Sideoats grama seedlings are vigorous and stands establish quickly in a weed free seedbed. Like most native grass species all seed will not germinate at the same time. Soil temperature and available moisture has a noticeable effect on seedling germination. Problem pests that many attack sideoats grama stands include grasshoppers and rusts.



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*Providing Leadership for the  
Stewardship of Rangelands  
Based on Sound Ecological  
Principles*