

CRITANA THICKSPIKE WHEATGRASS

**A CONSERVATION
PLANT FOR
MONTANA
AND WYOMING**

HISTORY

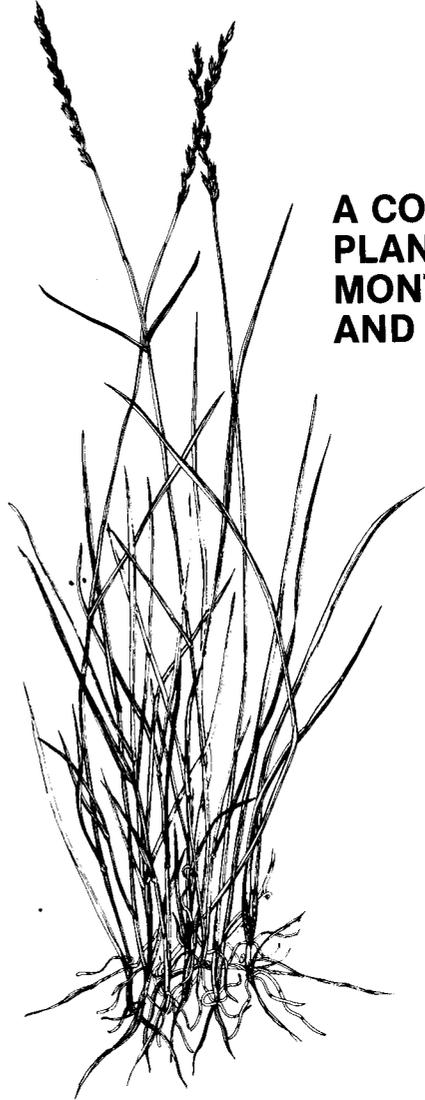
Critana was first collected in 1960 near Havre from plants growing on several roadside cuts. Selected from among 60 thickspike collections at the Bridger PMC, Critana was cooperatively released for commercial seed production by the Soil Conservation Service and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station in 1971.

The Plant Materials Center (PMC) at Bridger, Montana, grows and evaluates grasses, legumes, shrubs, forbs, and trees for specific conservation uses in Montana and Wyoming. The Center is part of a national plant materials program administered by SCS.

The Bridger PMC is owned by the conservation districts of Montana and Wyoming and is operated by the SCS.

For more information on Critana thickspike wheatgrass, contact your local SCS office or conservation district.

Assistance provided by SCS is available to everyone without regard to race, sex, color, creed, or national origin. (March 1981)

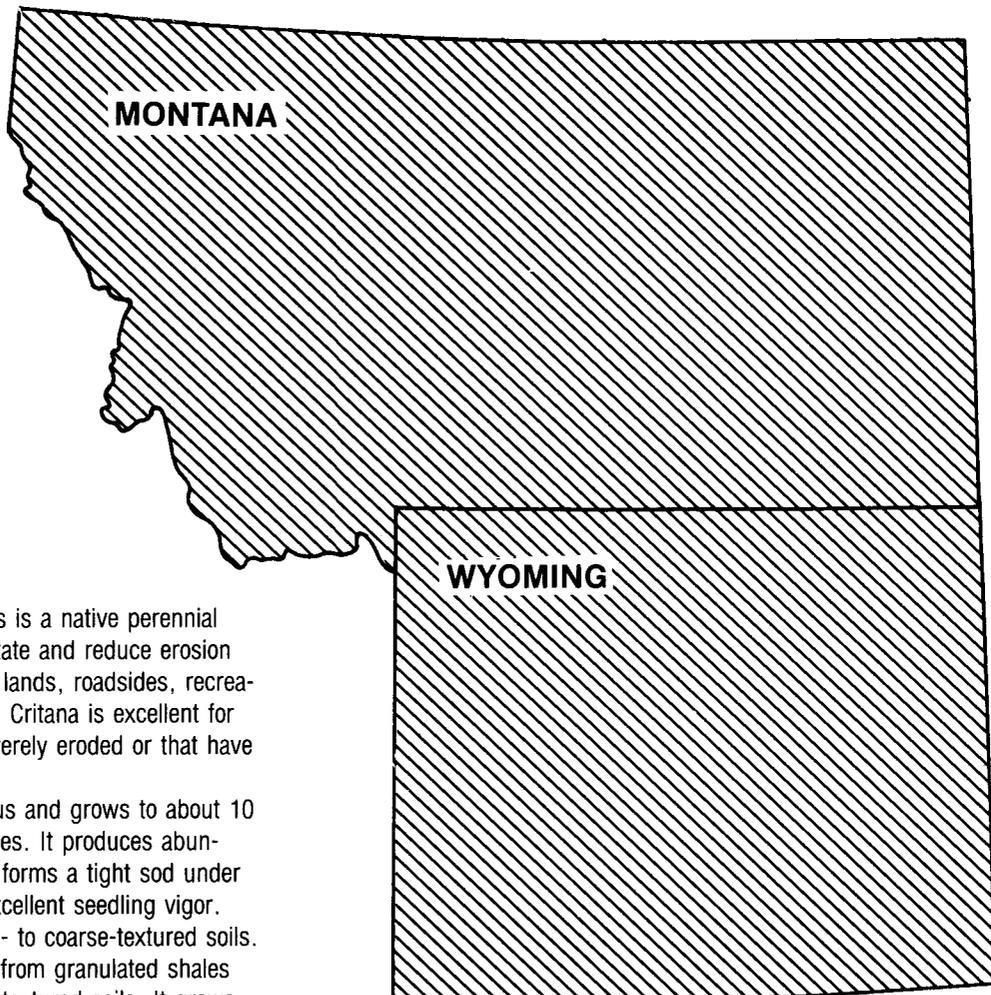


**U.S.D.A.
Soil
Conservation
Service**

**Plant
Materials
Center**

**Bridger,
Montana**

CRITANA THICKSPIKE WHEATGRASS



Critana thickspike wheatgrass is a native perennial grass which can be used to vegetate and reduce erosion on disturbed sites such as mined lands, roadsides, recreation areas, and construction sites. Critana is excellent for reseeding range sites that are severely eroded or that have low fertility.

Critana is strongly rhizomatous and grows to about 10 to 12 inches in height on good sites. It produces abundant, fine, light green leaves and forms a tight sod under dryland conditions. Critana has excellent seedling vigor.

Critana is adapted to medium- to coarse-textured soils. It is also adapted to soils derived from granulated shales and clays that behave like coarse-textured soils. It grows in the 10- to 20-inch precipitation zone in the northern Rocky Mountains and adjacent Great Plains regions. Critana adapts to elevations ranging from 2,000 to 7,500 feet.

Planting and Managing

Stands of Critana to control erosion are easily obtained with accepted cultural practices. Both late fall and early spring seedings are satisfactory. No fertilizers are necessary to establish the stand. Once solid stands are established for erosion control, management of Critana varies with the situation. Usually, no mowing is needed and grazing should be prohibited. Thin stands can be improved with additions of nitrogen.

On most range sites, Critana is not considered a key management species. However, it provides abundant spring forage and has good palatability. On range sites

 Areas where Critana Thickspike Wheatgrass is adapted

where thickspike is the key species, especially on soils derived from granulated shales, Critana may be the most productive species.

Under good management practices, Critana produces excellent seed crops and will do so for 3 or 4 years. Seed production declines rapidly after about 4 years, and new stands must be established. Supplemental irrigation water insures the best seed crops; however, good seed yields have been obtained under dryland conditions. The seed matures in mid-July and is harvested by windrowing and threshing. There are no particular threshing or cleaning problems.