

The Enemy: Foxtail barley (*Hordeum jubatum*)

Strategy: Also called Squirrel tail barley, this native perennial bunch grass invades highly disturbed pastures and roadsides. The silver-green plant grows to a height of 18 inches and forms a shiny, bushy head at maturity. This species of grass grows in clumps with seed heads that contain many seeds with long awns. Once mature these awns curly outward and are easily detached from the stem and, uniquely, gives the seed the ability to tumble across a field in a light wind.

Attack: When I see this in a field I generally can tell that the pasture has been overgrazed for years or has a leaky ditch which allows the pasture to be over watered and thus this disturbance allows this plant to turn into an invasive weed. As a native it grows in Rangeland, generally where water stood at one time. Although it is grazed early in the spring, it really becomes a problem in the summer. The seeds with its enormous awn can cause mouth damage to livestock and has been known to 'dig' itself into the mouth, nose, and ears of livestock and even some house hold pets. Once established the weed can quickly take over a field.

Defense: Stop abusing the pasture! Repair your ditch and reseed a disturbed site to keep this from becoming a weed. Taking grass from a grass pasture is difficult. Once you see clumpy grasses forming in your pasture you should know that something wrong. Digging these small clumps can easily remove the plant. Application of Roundup® very early in spring is moderately effective as well as Plateau like chemistry. A new herbicide called Lambient® is somewhat effective. Application rate of 1.2 oz early in spring works good. Early identification is key to keeping this native plant from becoming a terribly weed.

