

Echinochloa crus-galli

Recognize the problem

Family: Poaceae (grass family).

Common names: Barngrass, cocksfoot panicum, cockspur.

Annual grass, spreading or stiffly erect, tufted or reclining at base; 0.3-2 m high; flowering stems rooting at lower nodes, cylindrical, without hairs, and filled with white spongy tissue.

Leaves: Dark green, linear and flat; 10-65 cm long and 5-30 mm wide; usually without hairs.

Inflorescence: Branched, upright or nodding (10-25 cm long) with flowerheads ('branches', ca. 5cm long) set more or less on one side of the flowering stem. Flowers set on one side of each flowerhead, often with long awn.

Fruit/Seed: small (1.3-2.2 mm long, 1-1.8 mm wide), brownish; seeds have a marked dormancy of 3-4 months and do not germinate in water deeper than 12 cm.

Background

Origin: Probably native to tropical Asia.

Introduction: As fodder and forage, or as contaminant of seed.

Habitat: Prefers humid and warm regions, but is cosmopolitan; prefers open sunny place and mainly restricted to wet soils; tolerates drier soils and partial submergence.

Spread: By wind, water or as a contaminant in soil, seed crops, and on agricultural machinery.

Invades: Crops, pasture and grasslands, disturbed land, waterways, rivers and streams, coastal areas, rail and roadsides.

Impact: Barngrass can be a very serious weed in rice, maize, soya bean, lucerne, vegetables, root crops, orchards and vineyards. Its similar habit and appearance make it difficult to distinguish from rice when young. Crop losses can be substantial, with reported losses in rice, maize, sorghum and other crops of over 50%, depending on crop type and weed density. Barngrass increases costs of weeding and is an alternative host to a wide range of crop pests. The species also negatively affects native species by outcompeting them.

Barnyard grass inflorescence.
(Photo by Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org)



Base of plant. (Photo by Tomas Marquez/DuPont-Spain)



Scientific name(s) > *Echinochloa crus-galli*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: All Countries



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