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| prairie threeawn |
| *Aristida oligantha* Michx. |
| Plant Symbol = AROL |

*Contributed By: USDA NRCS National Plant Data*

*Center*



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**Warning: Can be mechanically injurious to livestock.**

## Alternate Names

oldfield three-awn, oldfield 3-awn

## Uses

# Prairie threeawn has little value as a forage grass. After maturity, seeds get in the wool of sheep and in the eyes of both cattle and sheep if they graze areas with a dense stand. This grass establishes easily under adverse conditions and protects soil against erosion until more desirable grasses take over. It is an indicator of deteriorated range condition.

## Status

Please consult the PLANTS Web site and your State Department of Natural Resources for this plant’s current status, such as, state noxious status and wetland indicator values.

## Description

Prairie threeawn is a native, cool‑season, annual grass. The height is between 6 and 20 inches. The leaf blade is flat, about 1/4 inch wide, and rolls inward during hot, dry weather. The leaf sheath is mostly basal. The seedhead is a loose, open panicle; glumes have three awns about 1‑1/2 to 3 inches long that curve at the base.

*Distribution*: For current distribution, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Web site.

## Management

Range reseeding with perennial grasses is the most practical and economical way to reduce this grass and improve ranges for livestock production.

## Establishment

Prairie threeawn growth starts in early spring from seed. The life cycle is one month to 6 weeks. Prairie threeawn is a good seed producer. The seedlings are vigorous. It grows readily on areas, such as old abandoned fields, oil‑well locations, and cattle round‑up grounds.

## Cultivars, Improved and Selected Materials (and area of origin)

Please contact your local NRCS Field Office.

**Reference**

Leithead, H.L., L.L. Yarlett, & T.N. Shiflett. 1976. 100 native forage grasses in 11 southern states. USDA SCS *Agriculture Handbook No. 389*, Washington, DC.

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For more information about this and other plants, please contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District, and visit the PLANTS Web site<<http://plants.usda.gov>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>

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