

Wild Barley Project in Clackamas County

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Hare barley (*Hordeum murinum* ssp. *leporinum*) is a non-native, cool-season, annual grass that is invading pasture systems across Oregon. In California, hare barley probably became naturalized in the late 1700's with the arrival of Spanish missionaries. Since that time it has spread to neighboring states. It has several common names including wild barley, foxtail or foxtail barley though hare barley is not a foxtail species. Hare barley may now infest up to 10,000 pasture acres just in western Oregon.

Hare barley has the characteristic "wild barley" seed head that usually remains intact on plants long after it has completed its life cycle. The spikelets can injure the mouth, eyes, ears and skin of animals so mature plants are rarely grazed leading to abundant seed production. .

In 2008, a group of Clackamas county livestock producers encouraged OSU Extension to tackle the growing problem in Clackamas County. These producers had tried reducing hare barley infestations by sporadic tillage, heavy grazing early in the season, propane flaming and mowing but efforts resulted in limited success.

Labeled herbicide options to selectively control grass weeds in established pastures are limited. However some promising newer herbicide chemistries have reached the market place that may have a fit for wild barley control in Oregon pastures. To test these and other products, two research trials were established in 2008. One is located in the Canby area at Grassland Farms (Gordon Wanner) and the second near Molalla at Dale and Julie Bystrom's farm. The first season evaluation (July 2009) showed promising results with several products. This project will continue through 2010.