

Plant Name	Scientific	Common	Family	Date Reviewed 03/24/20
Bouteloua gracillis 'Blonde Ambition' PP 22048		Blonde Ambition blue grama grass	Poaceae	
Propagation Method		Native to		
division		Western US		
Treatments (Suggested procedures)				
<p>This clonal selection is propagated by division of the clumps in spring and summer. Clumps can be cut into 3-5 sprig pieces and placed directly into 2 1/2" pots using a well drained potting mix (MetroMix 702 or equivalent) works well. Newly divided clumps should be placed under intermittent mist for a week to 10 days before moving onto growing benches.</p>				
Collection Timing and Strategies				
<p>Divisions can be taken anytime from actively growing plants. Note: Divisions made from plants in full flower (mid- to late summer) may not re-establish as readily as more vegetative plants earlier in the growing season. Winter in cold frames for vernalization, then move into heated greenhouse to wake it up. Once awake, divisions can be taken as early as April. These divisions can be redivided in June or early July depending on their size. Skilled propagators should be able to divide their plants 4 times by late fall (early May, mid-June, early August, early Oct.) and get 3 to 4 starts each time they divide the plants. Conservatively, from each original plant they can hope to have (220) to (250) - 3 1/2" pots ready for spring 2011 from an Oct. division or (50) to (60) gallon pots for spring 2011 from an August division (they don't divide that last time in Oct). Using this regime the plants can be vernalized (late December-early March) and ready to bloom nicely in summer 2011.</p>				
Cultural Information				
Greenhouse conditions				
<p>Grow in conditions suitable for bedding plants. Fertilize regularly but don't over do the N. Most continuous feed regimes are fine. Let dry between waterings, but don't keep soggy or too dry. Use a well drained soil-less potting soil suitable for perennials; not too much peat using composed bark or other coarse admendment for drainage.</p>				
Garden conditions				
<p>A very easy-to-grow native warm season grass that greens up outdoors once the weather begins to warm in late spring (late April-early May). Cut back hard in early spring. Fertilize once annually in fall, top dressing with compost or other natural/organic fertilizers. Don't overfeed with a high N containing chemical fertilizer.</p>				
Other Expert Advice				
<p>This clonal selection is fertile and will set seed if planted in a garden with other seed grown Blue Grama grass in the garden or the surrounding fields. To maintain this plant's characteristic blond seed heads, it should be propagated only by division. Seedlings from its seed will most likely revert to brown-black seed heads characteristic to the species.</p>				

Updated Propagation Protocol for *Bouteloua gracilis* 'Blonde Ambition' PP#22,048
September, 2016 from David Salman, Waterwise Gardening LLC
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Blonde Ambition'(B.A.) is not a difficult grass to propagate and has a much longer season of propagation, especially when compared to other division propagated native cultivars of *Schizachyrium* (Little Bluestem) and *Andropogon* (Big Bluestem). But you do need to have a consistent system in place.

To fertilize, use Peter's 20-20-20 or similar balanced water soluble formulation a rate of 100 to 200 ppm applied every week to two weeks. Avoid ammonium nitrate or other high N, low P and K formulations.

A well-drained composted bark/sphagnum peat potting used for perennials and other plants that like a faster draining soil is fine. A mix of sphagnum and perlite maybe a little too moisture retentive, especially in high humidity regions. B.A. tolerates dry heat quite well, but hates growing conditions with continuous *high heat & humidity* in a greenhouse.

B.A. can be propagated all spring and into mid-summer. It can be divided when it is in bloom in late July- Sept. but there will not be as many vegetative off-sets to work with. So March - mid-July is optimum. It can be done year-round in a heated greenhouse with long day night time interruption lights overhead and 60 F degree night temperatures. (But of course the intervals between dividing the pots is longer unless HID lighting is used during the day and early evening.)

After working with many different plug and pot sizes to grow the stock, we have decided that growing, dividing and re-potting the grass in 2.5" wide x 3" deep pots (32 per flat) is the most productive. Or you can use a McConkey 4" square. (16 per square 17" x 17" flat) and just take slightly larger 2 or 3 sprig division. (see photo right to see the size of the bare-root division we re-pot back into the 2.5" pot.) We don't do it in #1 ("gallon") or larger pots any more. We generally average about



(gallon) or larger pots any more. we generally average about 3.5 to 4 divisions per 2.5" pot giving you a 3.5 to 4X multiplier each time you divide them.



We divide it and re-pot a 1 or 2 sprig division right back into a 2.5" pot and put it under mist in full sun for 5-7 days at 16-30 minute intervals for 6-8 seconds (or hand mist 3-4 times per day in a semi-shade position). During the prime times in mid-spring to mid-summer, they are ready to re-divide in about 6-7 weeks. Just watch the sprigs initially and make sure they don't get a little gray and/or the grass blades roll inward, which indicates they are too dry. Also watch for signs of overwatering in the mist.

When we do plugs, we use a T.O. deep 72 plug and not the larger 50 or 38 plugs that are common with many grass nurseries; B.A. is a finer textured grass and doesn't need the larger plug unless specified by the buyer.

We cut the 2.5" pots back every 2 to 3 weeks to about 6" in height to encourage tillering and maximize the number of divisions in each pot. Once they begin to flower in late July, cut back to 6-8" in height every 3 to 4 weeks to keep the pots from getting overgrown. If the stock pots become over-grown, be sure to clean out the dead grass blades after they are cut back. This is important to keep the crown clean and dry and reduce the potential for crown rot. Sanitation (keeping the plants trimmed and dead grass blades removed) is always important especially for overwintered stock that is not being actively divided.

