

SUMMER INSPECTION & IDENTIFICATION

Summer is when weeds and poisonous plants become more of a problem in pastures and hay fields, so it's important to set aside time to check for issues. We recommend the following resources for identifying toxic plants in Midwest pastures and forages:

- **University of Wisconsin:** bit.ly/2uq0bZP
- **Purdue University:** bit.ly/2sGpf1v
- **University of Minnesota:** bit.ly/4br1AVb

This also provides the perfect opportunity to identify which grass species are present in your fields. This is especially useful after a new seeding or inter-seeding.

A quick guide to the basic grass species is provided below. Start by looking for the presence of auricles (short attachments at the base of a leaf blade that connect it to the stem) and ligules (small, thin tissue at the junction of the leaf sheath and stem).

Perennial Ryegrass

- Glossy underside of leaves
- Long auricles
- Purpling at base of stem
- Folded vernation
- Mature plants have no awns on seed



Annual Ryegrass

- Smooth, shiny underside of leaves
- Long auricles
- Rolled vernation
- Awns present on seed



Orchardgrass

- Blue, emerald tint
- Flat at the base of stem – folded in whorl
- Folded vernation
- No auricles, but long ligule



Tall Fescue

- Wider, thick leaves with prominent veining
- Rolled vernation
- Short, but hairy auricle



Timothy

- Crown just above the roots
- Top of leaf twisted clockwise
- Rolled vernation



Bromegrass

- M or W shaped "wrinkle" on leaf
- Usually starts with leaves out of base
- No real auricles or ligules
- Rolled vernation

