

That's not yellow foxtail, it's little barley**June 1, 2017**

Your preemergence herbicide isn't failing to control yellow foxtail. Little barley (*Hordeum pusillum*) is a winter annual grass that is seeding now, and may be confused with foxtails because of similarities among seedheads. However, yellow foxtail (and others) are summer annual grasses, which are just now germinating in southeastern NE – they will seed later in summer.

Little barley is best "controlled" by encouraging a dense turf stand or with a preemergence herbicide in fall. Certainty (sulfosulfuron) is labeled for little barley control in warm-season grasses, but we generally don't recommend postemergence herbicides for control of little barley. The species will thin and die as temperatures warm this summer. Overseeding thin areas this spring (and especially in late summer for cool-season grasses) will improve turf density and limit little barley establishment in future years.



Figure 1. Little barley in thin turf (*left*). Little barley seedheads (*right*) may be confused with those of foxtail species.

Bottom line. Yellow foxtail (a summer annual) is not yet seeding, but little barley (a winter annual) is. Postemergence control of little barley is not recommended – the species will die soon. Improve turf now or in fall to limit little barley establishment, or use a preemergence herbicide in fall.

Cole Thompson, Asst. Prof. & Extension Integrated Turfgrass Management Specialist, cole.thompson@unl.edu