

Prairie Landscaping and Reduced Maintenance Cover Plantings

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Mixtures (height)	Approximate Percent	Species	Varieties	Approximate Broadcast Minimum Seeding Rate (PLS lbs. / 10,000 sq. ft.)
1. Native Cool-season Midgrass (12"-30")	30	western wheatgrass	Rodan, Rosana, Flintlock	3.6
	60	green needlegrass	Lodorm	4.5
	10	Canada wildrye	Mandan	1.0
2. Native Mix of Cool-season and Warm-season Midgrass (12"-30")	10	western wheatgrass	Rodan, Rosana, Flintlock	1.2
	20	green needlegrass	Lodorm	1.5
	35	*sideoats grama	Pierre, Killdeer, Butte	2.6
	35	*little bluestem	Badlands, Itasca	1.8
3. Native Warm-season Midgrass (12"-30")	40	*sideoats grama	Pierre, Killdeer, Butte	3.0
	20	*blue grama	Bad River	0.5
	40	*little bluestem	Badlands, Itasca	2.0
4. Native Warm-season Tallgrass (24"-60")	30	*big bluestem	Bison, Bonilla, Sunnyview	2.3
	40	*Indiangrass	Tomahawk, Holt	2.8
	30	switchgrass	Dacotah, Forestburg, Sunburst	1.4
5. Native Warm-season Shortgrass (6"-12")	80	*blue grama	Bad River	2.5
	20	buffalograss	Bowie, Cody	5 (bulk)
6. Non-native Cool-season Rural Mix (12"-24")	25	crested wheatgrass	northern adapted	rates and percentages vary, 5-10 lbs. average total
	25	fairway wheatgrass	northern adapted	
	25	perennial ryegrass	northern adapted	
	25	Kentucky bluegrass	northern adapted	
7. Wildflowers (height varies, depending on mix)	Can be used with all above mixtures, but best with 1, 2, 3, and 4. Few varieties have been developed for prairie seeding. Recommended rates and species vary. Regionally adapted mixtures are available with suggested rates of 2-6 pounds per 10,000 square feet. Regional mixtures often contain non-native wildflowers for better initial color and faster establishment.			

*Light and/or fuzzy seed which may cause problems in certain seeding equipment. Purchasing debearded seed (fuzz removed) is recommended whenever possible, or use equipment designed for seeding native grass, or spread seed by hand.

Importance of Varieties

Winter hardy grass varieties or local sources adapted to the cold climate of the Northern Great Plains are critical for successful stand establishment. Superior varieties have been developed for various conservation purposes. Use only those varieties listed or local sources and do not accept substitutions. Local source seed or native harvest seed of northern origin is also acceptable.

Seeding Rates

Recommended seeding rates can vary greatly depending on seedbed preparation, seeding equipment, soils, irrigation, mulch, slope, and many other factors. The minimum seeding rates presented in this brochure reflect good seedbed preparation and broadcast seeding. Higher seeding rates can be used for quicker cover and higher plant density, but maintenance requirements may also increase. Reduced rates of about one-half those listed are often used when seeding with a grass drill, or to reduce costs on larger acreages.

Seeding Dates

Cool-season:	Warm-season:
early spring (March-May)	late spring to early summer (May-June)
late summer (August)	(mixtures of warm-season and cool-season are best seeded in May-June)
dormant (after October 15)	

Establishment and Maintenance

Critical factors in achieving a successful grass stand are adequate seedbed preparation, shallow seeding depth, packing after seeding (if broadcast seeded), and weed control. Mowing is often used for initial weed control but care must be taken to not remove basal leaves of the wildflowers. Specific soil problems need to be taken into consideration and discussed with knowledgeable specialists. Native grasses generally require limited maintenance once they are established. **When these areas are left unmowed, the grasses and wildflowers attract wildlife and create natural landscapes that provide seasonal displays of color and texture.**

“The two main reasons grass seedings fail are planting too deep and lack of weed control”. – from Five Keys to Successful Grass Seeding, available on Bismarck PMC website: <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/ndpmc/publications.html>