

TALL FESCUE SEED PRODUCTION

Description & Adaptation

Tall fescue is a long-lived, perennial grass with a deep root system. It is a cool season bunchgrass that is well adapted to high moisture and poor drainage. Tall fescue can tolerate adverse soil conditions; however, better seed production will occur on more productive land.

Tall fescue is widely used for turfgrass applications including lawns and sports fields. Its use in blends continues to grow with improved tolerance to wear, heat and drought.

Tall fescue needs one year to establish, and does not produce seed in the first year. After the establishment year, tall fescue will produce seed for 2-3 years depending on the stand. The crop can be under-seeded to wheat, canola, flax or on its own.

Field Selection

Tall fescue responds well to moisture and nitrogen. It is adapted to different soil types, ranging from light textured sandy soils to heavy clay soils. The field must be free of residual herbicides such as Edge, Treflan and others. It is important to review the herbicide history of the field before planting. Clean fields are important to maximize seed quality. Glyphosate application in the year prior to establishment will help eliminate perennial weeds.

Weed and Disease Control

Wild oats, cleavers and quack grass are the worst weed problems. Cleavers and other broadleaf weeds can be controlled with herbicides, however, options for wild oat control in crop are minimal and there is no in-crop control for quack grass.

Production Benefits

- Multiple crop years reduce workload during planting season
- Early harvest splits up fall workload
- Easy to swath and combine
- Good standability for a grass species
- Increases organic matter
- Tolerance to salinity, alkalinity and acidity
- Break-crop effect benefits annual crops in rotations
- Guaranteed minimum contract pricing with opportunity to capture market upside
- Excellent profitability track record



Overview

Seeding Rate	5 - 8 lbs/ac
Seeding Depth	Max ¾ inch
Row Spacing	7 -15 inches
Seed Yield	500 to 1,400 lbs/ac
Seed Production Life	2-3 years
Companion Crop	Wheat, canola flax, none
Soil pH	5 to 8.0
Fertility	High nitrogen rates required to maximize yield
Swath Timing	Late July to early August
Harvest Timing	5-7 days after swathing
Seed Moisture	Dry is 12%

<https://brettyoung.ca/seed-production/tall-fescue>

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