

## PLANT HARDINESS ZONE 5 DATASET

### **COVER CROP DESCRIPTION**

Tall tropical legume. Plant in early summer; does not tolerate cool soils. Should be seeded by July 1st in plant hardiness zone 5 after soil warms to 55 degrees. Good forage potential in areas with sufficient heat. Will tolerate high mowing (> 18"). Large N fixation potential. Effectively suppresses root-knot nematodes. Low weed risk, but with enough time can set viable seed. Becomes stemmy as it matures. Inoculate seed; cross-inoculates with cowpea. Certain cultivars contain alkaloids which are poisonous to livestock; check before feeding to animals. Spindly growth habit with narrow leaves seems to make it a better choice for mixes than in monoculture. Mix with sorghum-sudangrass, pearl millet, and sunflower for a diverse warm season mixture.







Sunn Hemp - Larson [2020]

Sunn Hemp - Ackroyd [2020]

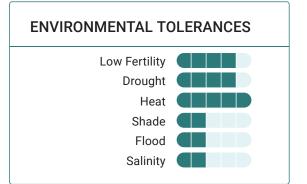
Sunn Hemp - Ackroyd [2020]

## **GOALS**

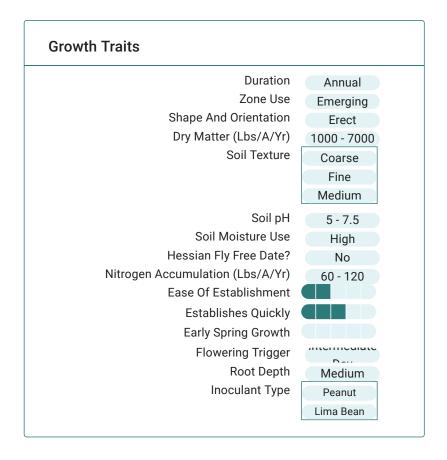
**Growing Window** Short Nitrogen Scavenging Lasting Residue Prevent Fall Soil Erosion Prevent Spring Soil Erosion Forage Harvest Value Nitrogen Fixation

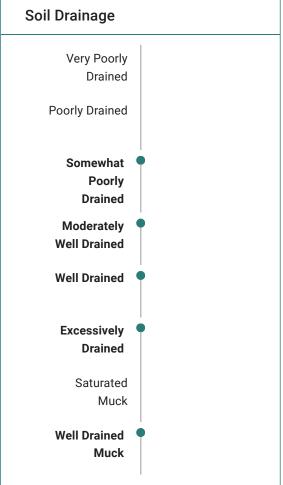
Penetrates Plow Pan **Reduces Surface Compaction** Improve Soil Organic Matter Increase Soil Aggregation **Good Grazing** Pollinator Food

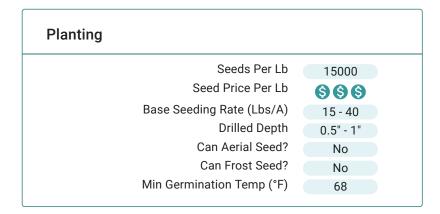
# **WEEDS** Residue Suppresses Summer Annual Weeds **Outcompetes Summer Annual Weeds** Suppresses Winter Annual Weeds Persistence Volunteer Establishment

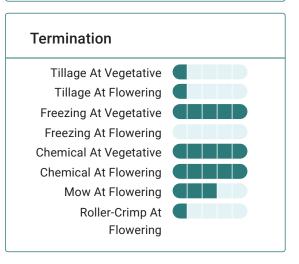


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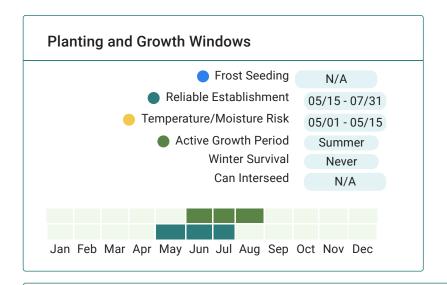








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### **Extended Comments**

**Basic Agronomics:** Dry matter highly dependent on planting and termination date and precipitation. Seeds are toxic to livestock. Bloat potential that is easily managed. For grazing purposes, restrict to 30% of total ration or mixing with a grass is recommended.

**Weeds:** Sunn hemp does not set seed in cold regions. Mature sunn hemp residue can be a problem. Innoculation advised.

Nematodes: Supports reproduction of some root-knot nematode species/races.

**Insects:** Interplanted with zucchini can reduce stripped and spotted cucumber numbers and result in greater spider numbers. However, if not kept at the right height can be too competitive with the crop

# **References & Resources**

<u>2015 Cover Crop Mix in Corn Silage Trial</u>, University of Vermont Extension <u>Summer Cover Crops</u>, Penn State Extension