LEGUME

Alfalfa, Dormant Medicago sativa

This data is based on expert opinion.

100 x 100



Plant Hardiness Zone 7 Dataset



View Photos

COVER CROP DESCRIPTION

Perennial. Not commonly used as a cover crop. Needs high soil pH, good fertility; not for wet soils. Good drought tolerance once established. Excellent legume hay crop, very deep taproot, excellent N fixer. Best for multi-year growth (2 to 6 summers) and double-duty as forage and soil builder. Cut for hay or clip occasionally to keep vegetative and maintain stand. For hay, 1st cut at bud stage, next cuts every 30-40 days (late bud to ¼ bloom), last cut in fall in time for 8" regrowth. Dormant in winter; mix with cool-season perennial grass (e.g., orchardgrass) or overseed with annual grass (e.g, wheat) for winter cover and to moderate C:N ratio at termination. Consider seeding with a nurse crop such as spring oats at low rate or small grains that will be harvested/mowed off to release perennial understory. Inoculate seed with the appropriate Rhizobium spp.; cross-inoculates with sweetclover.



GOALS

Growing Window Very Long Nitrogen Scavenging Lasting Residue Prevent Fall Soil Erosion Prevent Spring Soil Erosion **Promote Water Quality** Forage Harvest Value Nitrogen Fixation

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

WEEDS

Residue Suppresses Summer Annual Weeds Outcompetes Summer Annual Weeds Suppresses Winter Annual Weeds Persistence

Volunteer Establishment

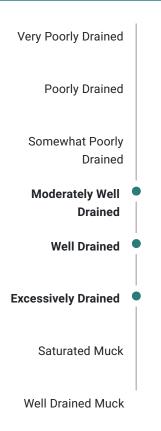
ENVIRONMENTAL TOLERANCES



BASIC AGRONOMICS

Duration Perennial Zone Use Common Shape And Orientation Erect Active Growth Period Spring Summer Fall C:N Dry Matter (Lbs/A/Yr) 1700 - 5800 Soil Texture Fine Medium Coarse Soil PH 6.2 - 8.5 Soil Moisture Use High Hessian Fly Free Date? No Nitrogen Accumulation (Lbs/A/Yr) 50 - 150

SOIL DRAINAGE



GROWTH

Ease Of Establishment Establishes Quickly Early Spring Growth Flowering Trigger Long Day

PLANTING

Seeds Per Lb	226800
Seed Price Per Lb	888
Base Seeding Rate (Lbs/A)	12 - 16
Drilled Depth	0.25" - 0.5"

Root Architecture TapFibrous Can Aerial Seed? No

Root Depth Deep Can Frost Seed? No

Inoculant Type Alfalfa Min Germination Temp (°F) 34

Sweetclover

TERMINATION

Tillage At Vegetative Tillage At Flowering Freezing At Vegetative Freezing At Flowering Chemical At Vegetative Chemical At Flowering Mow At Flowering Roller-Crimp At Flowering

PLANTING DATES

Frost Seeding	N/A
Reliable Establishment	08/15 - 09/01
Temperature/Moisture Risk	N/A
Can Interseed	N/A