

Sheep Fescue

(*Festuca ovina*)



Introduced Foothills Grass

Growth Habit

Sheep Fescue is a densely tufted, low growing bunchgrass. It has fine leaves growing to a height of 15-30 cm (6-12 inches). It is a blue-green color, and can be used for turf in shade. It has excellent winter hardiness and develops a large root mass, making this a long-lived variety. **Sheep Fescue** differs from hard fescue in that it is shorter (5-10 cm or 2-4 inches), slightly more drought tolerant, and has a blue-green color.

Adaptation

Sheep Fescue is very shade tolerant, more so than creeping red fescue or hard fescue. Sheep fescue does well in sandy, gravelly soils, but can grow well in loam soil. It is only fair in clay soils. Sheep fescue is tolerant of acid soils.

Reclamation Uses

Sheep Fescue establishes slowly, but has better seedling vigor than common sheep fescue. Because of the slow establishment and non-aggressive nature of sheep fescue it is a non-invasive species. Once the root system has developed it will persist.

Sheep Fescue will establish on sandy and gravelly soils of low nutrient levels. It is shade tolerant and tolerant of competition of faster establishing, taller species in a seed mix. It is not tolerant of saline or alkaline soils, which limits its use under some prairie conditions.

Quick Facts

Growth Habit	Flooding Tolerance	Drought Tolerance	Shade Tolerance	Soil pH	Density
Low growing Bunchgrass Fine leafed Blue-green color	Poor	High	Excellent	Acidic	Very High