

TALL FESCUE SEED PRODUCTION

Tall fescue is a long-lived, perennial grass with a deep root system. It is a cool season bunch grass 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 - making it an excellent cool-season option in the United States transition zone and other regions where warm-season grass is grown.

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 flax, wheat 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. A field that has had glyphosate applications and is clean of quackgrass is essential.

Weed Control

Wild oats, cleavers and quackgrass are the worst weed problems. Wild oats, cleavers and other broadleaf weeds can be controlled with herbicides; however, there is no in-crop control for quackgrass.

Production Benefits

- Multiple crop years reduce workload during planting season
- Early harvest splits up fall workload
- Ease of harvest – Easy to swath and combine
- Good standability for a grass species
- Increases organic matter
- Tolerance to salinity, alkalinity and acidity
- Break-crop effect of grasses has been shown to benefit annual crops

Overview

Seeding Rate	5-6 lb./acre
Row Spacing	7-15"
Seed Value	\$0.55 to \$0.70 per lb.
Seed Yield	500 to 1,400+ lb./acre
Seed Production Life	2-3 years
Companion Crop	Flax, Wheat, None
Soil pH	4.5 to 8.0
Fertility	High Nitrogen user
Swath Timing	Mid-to-Late July
Harvest Timing	5-7 days after swathing
Moisture	Dry is 11%

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1-800-665-5015

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Contracting Seed Production

Compared to other commodity crops, turfgrass seed production has an excellent profitability track record. Many of our seed production contracts allow growers to lock in high price levels and do not limit upside, which can really help add to a farm's bottom line. Over the last five years, BrettYoung has consistently paid above the minimum contract price for tall fescue seed production.

Tall Fescue 5 Year History

