

ANNUAL RYEGRASS

This cool-season grass is an annual which is adapted to late fall seeding, germinating rapidly, and is tolerant of hard, difficult soils. It has excellent root mass, continues growing at low temperatures and at lower pH ranges. When tilled into the soil in spring, it adds organic matter to improve soil texture and workability. Plant in full sun/light shade.

SOW: September through November

RATE: 1 lb. per 500 sq. ft

AUSTRIAN PEAS

Large-seeded legumes such as Austrian peas are very good for use as cover crops, building soil tilth and adding organic matter. Peas like well drained, fertile, loamy soils. Highly recommended for previously worked soils. Full sun.

SOW: Plant through December

RATE: 1 lb. per 200 sq. ft

BUCKWHEAT

A summer annual, buckwheat grows rapidly, beginning to flower in as little as 5 to 6 weeks after germination. It should be tilled into the soil or cut and composted when it begins to flower. A densely growing stand of buckwheat helps shade out weeds. It is adapted to soils that are slightly acidic.

SOW: May through late October

RATE: 1 lb. per 400 sq. ft

COMMON VETCH

Less winter hardy than hairy vetch, common vetch is best adapted to well drained, fertile soils. It is not tolerant of wet soils. Vetches are annual vine-type legumes with leaves ending in tendrils. An excellent nitrogen source and great for erosion control. Full sun.

SOW: Mid- September to November

RATE: 1 lb. per 400 sq. ft

CRIMSON CLOVER

Tolerant of full sun or half shade, it will grow readily on both sandy and clay type soils, but does not grow well with poor drainage. It forms a dense green carpet by mid-winter, and matures in April. The tender vegetation is easily tilled into the soil, adding organic matter. This annual captures free nitrogen from the air and converts it to a form available to other plants.

SOW: September to mid-October

RATE: 1 lb. per 400 sq. ft

DUTCH WHITE CLOVER

A long-lived legume adapted to silty loam and clay soils with pH range of 6.0 to 7.0. The roots seldom grow deeper than 2 feet. Mature height: 4-8". Tolerant of full sun or half shade.

SOW: July through November

RATE: 1 lb. per 2000 sq. ft

FALL CEREAL RYE

Because Fall Rye germinates quickly and grows rapidly in cool weather, it is valuable as a cover crop. It is one of the earliest and hardiest of the cereal grains. It tolerates heavy soils, low pH and poor drainage. When grown as a cover crop it may be seeded as early as August. Takes full sun to light shade.

SOW: August through December

RATE: 1 lb. per 250 sq. ft

FAVA BEAN

Not really a bean, but a member of the pea family. This tall legume is vigorous, deep rooted, and an excellent nitrogen fixer. The deep taproot loosens hard soils. Tolerates most soil types. Best in full sun.

SOW: Mid to late October

RATE: 1 lb. per 350 sq. ft.

OILSEED RADISH

Very deep rooted, this cover crop is best used in hard, previously unused soil. The taproot is excellent at breaking apart hard soil and provides much needed airspace. Winter temperatures kill off the plant, and the taproot slowly decomposes for easy tillage in the spring. Fast growing it provides quick erosion control.

SOW: September through October

RATE: 1 lb. per 2000-3000 sq. ft

HOW AND WHEN TO PLANT GARDEN COVER CROPS

After your garden produce is harvested, till the plant residue into the soil where it will decompose to produce more humus. This also prepares the soil for the cover crop seed. You may use either a drop spreader, a broadcast spreader, or simply broadcast the seed by hand. For more even coverage, make two seeding passes over the garden at right angles to each other. Lightly rake the seed into the top ¼ inch of soil. The seed must be covered and in firm contact with the soil for best germination. If you seed before fall rains begin, the seeded area should be watered lightly to keep it moist until the seeds germinate. Cover with a thin layer of compost for added benefit.

RECOMMENDED SEEDING RATES:

Approximate number of square feet covered by 1 pound of seed:

ANNUAL RYE GRASS	500
AUSTRIAN PEAS	200
BUCKWHEAT	400
COMMON VETCH	400
CRIMSON CLOVER	400
DUTCH WHITE CLOVER	2000
FALL CEREAL RYE	250
FAVA BEAN	350
OILSEED RADISH	2000-3000

GARDENWAY MIX



40% Rye Grain

25% Austrian Peas

20% Yamhill Wheat

5% Annual Rye Grass

5% Common Vetch

5% Crimson Clover

The gardener who selects this cover crop mix receives many advantages:

- Large amounts of organic matter from roots and leaves, when tilled under in the spring, result in improved soil tilth.
- Crimson clover can return enough nitrogen that many crops may be grown without the addition of other fertilizer.
- These crops provide competition to inhibit weed growth.
- Nutrient loss from leaching is reduced.

Recommended seeding rate:

1 lb. per 250 sq. ft



Cover Crops

WHAT IS A COVER CROP?

A fast growing crop planted primarily to keep the soil covered for a short period of time, then plowed under as “green manure” or composted.

WHY PLANT A COVER CROP?

Large amounts of organic matter are added to the soil when the lush growth of green, mature crops is turned under. Organic matter improves soil texture as humus and stabilizes moisture content. The nutrients in these crops are returned to the soil, thus becoming a storehouse for future growth.

Legume plants are hosts to nitrogen-fixing bacteria which extract nitrogen from the air and convert it into a form that can be used by plants. When used as a cover crop, legumes return the nitrogen to the soil.

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