ALBERT LEA SEED

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Festulolium
(×*Festulolium* Asch. & Graebn.)

Description

Festulolium is a cross between meadow fescue and perennial or Italian ryegrass. It combines the quick establishment, high feed value, production and palatability of ryegrass with the extra persistence and summer productivity of fescue. It has a high sugar content that is easily digestible, allowing animals to gain a high-energy ratio for milk/meat conversion. Festulolium is often more winter hardy than perennial ryegrass but survivability over the long-term can still be suspect especially during harsh winters with little snow cover. It provides excellent season-long forage.

Overview

Uses: Pasture—Silage—Hay

Strengths: Fast establishment
Good digestibility
Better persistence than ryegrass
Can graze or cut during summer months

Weaknesses: Doesn't do well in monoculture
Avoid nutrient poor soils
Slow to dry for hay

Plant Information

Winterhardiness: Moderate

Drought-Tolerance: Moderate

Wet soil tolerance: Moderate

Average Nitrogen Fixation: -

Forage Yield Range: 3.5 to 6.2 Tons / Acre DM

Relative Forage Quality: ~ 109 to 132 (index value)

Seed and Seeding Info

Seeds per lb:	227,000
Seeding Rate Alone:	20 to 25 lbs / acre
Seeding Rate in Mixtures:	8 to 20 lbs / acre
Range of Seeding Dates:	Early to late spring, late summer
Methods of seeding:	Drill, broadcast, or bulk spread and dragged
Best seeding depth:	¼ - ½ in
Best Soil types:	Fertile, well-drained loam
pH tolerances:	5.5 - 7.0

Cultural and Harvest Information

As a grazing crop?

Graze festulolium down to about 3-4" after the plant reaches 10-12" in height. Festulolium performs best under a rotational grazing system in mixture with other suitable, shorter stature pasture legumes and/or grasses such as meadow fescue, tall fescue, orchardgrass, red clover and ladino clover. To maintain optimum yield and quality festulolium, like ryegrass, should be heavily and frequently grazed. For silage or green chop, festulolium needs to be cut before seed heads emerge for optimum forage quality.

As a haying crop?

Festulolium will also work well seeded with alfalfa. If added into alfalfa at the time of seeding, add 2-8 lb/acre along with 12-18 lb/acre of high-quality alfalfa. This combination will provide high yields and very high quality forage that can be harvested for dry hay, haylage, or green chop. Heavier stands of festulolium are difficult to cut with a sickle bar mower due to higher moisture content. Crimping and raking the hay will aid in drydown.

Websites & Resources

MSU: Is Festulolium a Grass you should Consider?
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_festulolium_a_cool_season_forage_grass_you_should_consider

Hay & Forage Grower: Cattle Feast on Festulolium
http://hayandforage.com/mag/farming_cattle_feast_festulolium

University of Minnesota: Harvesting Hay & Silage
http://www.mda.state.mn.us/protecting/conservation/crpoptions/harvesthay.aspx

University of Wisconsin: Forage Research & Extension
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/forage/

University of Wisconsin: Pasture Management & Grazing
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/grazing.htm

Graze Magazine (online edition)
http://www.grazeonline.com/

ATTRA: Pasture, Rangeland & Grazing Management
https://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/livestock/pasture.html

Purdue University: Grazing
http://www.extension.purdue.edu/dairy/forage/foragpub_graze.htm