



ALBERT LEA SEED

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Smooth Brome grass (*Bromus inermis* L.)

Description

Smooth brome grass (*Bromus inermis* L.) is a leafy, sod-forming perennial grass that is best suited for hay or early spring pasture. It is deep-rooted and spreads by underground rhizomes. Smooth brome was introduced from Europe and has been used as pasture forage for many years. Due to its aggressive growth habit and rhizomatous nature, smooth brome grass is an invasive species in the Midwest. It matures somewhat later in the spring than orchardgrass and makes less summer growth than orchardgrass. Forage quality of smooth brome grass compares well with other cool-season grasses, being affected primarily by stage of maturity. Smooth brome grass is the most widely used cool-season grass in North America. It is grown extensively in Canada and the north-central United States. Smooth brome grass survives periods of drought and extremes in temperature.

Overview

- Uses:** Pasture—Hay—Erosion control
- Strengths:** Excellent longevity
Survives periods of drought and extreme temperatures
Good nutrition and palatability
- Weaknesses:** Slow to establish
Limited production in mid-summer
Does not tolerate intensive cutting

Plant Information

- Winterhardiness:** Excellent
- Drought-Tolerance:** Excellent
- Wet soil tolerance:** Moderate
- Average Nitrogen Fixation:** NA
- Forage Yield Range:** 4.4 to 7.5 Tons / Acre DM
- Relative Forage Quality:** 125 – 150 (index value)
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Seed and Seeding Info

Seeds per lb:	125,000 to 140,000
Seeding Rate Alone:	15 to 18 lb / A
Seeding Rate in Mixtures:	3 to 6 lb / A
Range of Seeding Dates:	Spring or late summer
Methods of seeding:	Drilled or broadcast
Best seeding depth:	¼ to ½ in
Best Soil types:	slightly alkaline or acid soils
pH tolerances:	6.0 to 7.0

Cultural and Harvest Information

As a grazing crop?

Growth stage is the most important factor in smooth brome grass harvest management. Brome grass is somewhat tolerant of light grazing during the tillering stage of growth. During this initial flush of growth, the growing point is below the ground. Later, shoots enter the jointing stage of growth. During this stage, the growing point may be destroyed by mowing or close grazing. Begin grazing at 8 – 10 inches and remove animals when grass is 4 inches. Allow grass to re-grow for 28-35 days between grazing periods. Can companion seed with other pasture legumes such as alfalfa.

As a haying crop?

Timing is crucial when harvesting brome for hay or silage. Harvest hay when seed heads emerge. For optimum longevity of the pasture stand, use a 1 to 2 cut system for hay or silage. This will assure quality forage and quick regrowth of the new crop. Smooth brome grass persistence and yield are adversely affected by early harvesting of the spring growth. However, delaying the spring harvest beyond early bloom will result in large reductions in forage digestibility and protein content. If it is necessary to harvest a third cut, adjust the cutter bar above the growing point (4 inches) to assure a good harvest.

Albert Lea Seed House Product Information Guide

The information presented here is based on the best agronomic information we could cull from University Publications and other sources (usually identified). The cultural and agronomic information is relevant only to farming in the upper mid-west. This information is not infallible and is not a substitute for experience and/or education. We **do not guarantee** farming results based on

this information.