Description

Meadow fescue is a perennial, bunching grass with fine, glossy, bright green basal leaves. The leaf sheath is smooth and reddish purple at the base. Seed heads are an open panicle. It has a shallow and fibrous root system. Meadow fescue is well adapted to deep, rich soils and generally is more palatable to grazing livestock than tall fescue. It is also more winter hardy than tall fescue but yields less overall. Meadow fescue is especially well suited to frequent and intensively managed grazing systems. It grows and yields well in a wide variety of habitats across the Midwest, especially the driftless region of Wisconsin. Meadow fescue seed does not harbor the harmful endophytic fungi that can cause toxicity problems with grazing livestock. Moreover, meadow fescue cannot become infected from tall fescue endophytes.

Overview

Uses: Pasture—Hay—Non-agricultural use
Strengths: Good tolerance to acidic and poorly-drained soils
          Good tolerance to close grazing
          Better mid-summer growth then other cool season grasses
Weaknesses: Slow to establish
             Lower yielding than tall fescue
             High susceptibility to disease
            Low palatability

Plant Information

Winterhardiness: Good
Drought-Tolerance: Moderate to Poor
Wet soil tolerance: Excellent
Average Nitrogen Fixation: NA
Forage Yield Range: 2 to 4.75 Tons / Acre DM (Wisconsin)
Relative Forage Quality: average 149 (50:50 mix of alfalfa and meadow fescue)
Seed and Seeding Info

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Category</th>
<th>Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeds per lb:</td>
<td>227,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeding Rate Alone:</td>
<td>20 to 25 lb / A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeding Rate in Mixtures:</td>
<td>6 to 12 lb / A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Seeding Dates:</td>
<td>Early spring, late summer before August 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methods of seeding:</td>
<td>Broadcast or Drill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best seeding depth:</td>
<td>¼ to ½ in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Best Soil types:</td>
<td>Moderately coarse to fine</td>
</tr>
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<td>pH tolerances:</td>
<td>5.0 to 9.0</td>
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</tbody>
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Cultural and Harvest Information

As a grazing crop?

Meadow fescue is a good grazing grass when grown in mixture with timothy, orchard grass, and/or legumes. It is slightly more winter-hardy than perennial ryegrass. With proper fertilization and grazing management, it will tolerate periodic wet soils and is more tolerant than most grasses to grazing and traffic. Allow the stand to reach 8 to 10 inches then graze to 3 to 4 inches.

As a haying crop?

Good choice as an alfalfa companion. Yields are lower than tall fescue but forage quality is better. Utilize a 3-cut system for maximum forage yield. Meadow fescue will provide better re-growth in the warm summer months of July and August than orchardgrass or timothy.
this information.