

AUSTRIAN Winter Pea

Key Features

Austrian winter peas are a low-growing, vine producing legume. They are quite winter hardy and make an excellent forage, especially when mixed with a small grain like oats or barley. As part of a mix, they provide protein, while grasses add effective fiber. Heavy grazing is not recommended, as plants are sensitive to trampling. Flowers are reddish and seeds are dark. As a cover crop, winter peas may be faster growing in the fall than clover or vetch; consequently, may provide better winter ground coverage.

Winter peas produce abundant vining forage, contributes to short-term soil conditioning and generates high rates of nitrogen. Succulent stems break down easily and are a quick source of available nitrogen. These field peas grow rapidly in the cool, moist weather they encounter as winter annuals.

Winter peas are top nitrogen producers, yielding 90 to 150 pounds of nitrogen/acre and at times up to 300 pounds of nitrogen/acre.

Application

Cover Crop
Pasture
Pollinator

Planting Time

Early Fall

Establishment

Plant 1-3" deep, can plant deeper (up to 4") to aid in overwintering.

Management Keys

Peas are easily killed at any time with herbicides, or by disking or mowing after full bloom, the stage of maturity that provides the optimum N contribution. Disk lightly to preserve the tender residue for some short-term erosion control. Winter peas won't tolerate field traffic due to succulent stems, but long-vined varieties are better for weed control than short-vined types.

One consideration with winter peas is the quick breakdown leads to slimy conditions in the spring if they winterkill, especially in dense, pure stands. Planting with a winter grain provides some protection from winterkill and reduces matting of dead pea vegetation.



Seeding Rates

Drilled	35-45#
Precision Planting	22-28#
Broadcast	NR
Aerial	NR

Attributes

N Fixation	5
Nutrient Scavenging	3
Nutrient Release	5
Wind Erosion	3
Water Erosion	3

Scale 1-5 (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent)

