

Buckwheat VNS

Key Features

Buckwheat is a warm-season, broadleaf annual with superficial surface roots, a weak tap root and erect, reddish stems. The plant produces multiple branches along the stems, heart-shaped leaves, and clusters of small white flowers at the end of the branches. The flowers have pink anthers.

Buckwheat is an unusually fast-growing crop with a variety of uses. Its flexibility and wide adaptation allows it to be grown in most locations and is being used widely as a cover crop to smother weeds and improve the soil.

Flowering begins about three weeks after planting, and proceeds prolifically for a few weeks, before gradually tapering off as the plant matures. At the peak of flowering, a buckwheat field is a striking sea of white petals. After a flower is pollinated, a full-sized seed will form within 10 days, although that seed will need another week or two to reach maturity. Seeds appear and mature earlier on the lower stem, with seed development continuing up the stem as the plant matures. The prolific flowers on buckwheat have made the crop a good nectar source for honey bee keepers.

Application

Cover Crop
Pollinator

Planting Time

Spring to late Summer

Establishment

Buckwheat grows best on soils that are neither too compacted, nor too coarse or sandy. It can tolerate wet soils to a slight degree, but will generally fair better on soils where drainage is adequate.

Management Keys

In northern areas where most buckwheat is grown, buckwheat is usually planted in early summer, following a small grain that was harvested the previous summer. In Missouri, buckwheat should be grown as a double crop after winter wheat or canola are harvested. It could also be double cropped after an early spring crop, such as spring canola, oats or flax, which are all harvested in July. Missouri-grown buckwheat benefits from later planting, and is economically viable only as a double crop in this region. In certain situations, where rainfall has prevented planting a commodity, or hail has destroyed one, buckwheat can serve as an emergency late season crop.



Seeding Rate

Drilled	50-55#
Precision Planting	NR
Broadcast	NR

Seeding Depth

Plant no deeper than $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Characteristics

Soil Builder	3
Forage Quality	2
Early Spring Growth	5

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

