

Winter Cereal Forages



CEREAL RYE

Cereal rye is an excellent choice to serve as cover crop, forage, or to harvest as grain. As a cover crop, cereal rye is an excellent choice to prevent wind and water erosion while providing spring weed suppression and nutrient sequestration. Cereal rye works well in a cover crop blend with brassicas or legumes and demands a spring termination plan. As a forage, cereal rye harvested in boot stage can provide dairy quality silage, baleage or grazed forage. When harvested closer to full maturity, dry matter yields increase but quality declines. Cereal rye is the earliest cereal to green up in the spring providing paddocks for calving and earlier grain harvest when desired. Cereal rye can be planted the latest into the fall and winter in most areas.

WINTER TRITICALE

Winter triticale is a fall planted winter annual that is a cross between cereal rye and winter wheat. It holds the forage quality of wheat and the excellent disease resistance of cereal rye. The maturity of winter triticale will be longer than cereal rye, but it can serve similar purposes. If harvesting or grazing after mid-May, Triticale may provide higher yield and quality than cereal rye. Triticale can be planted slightly later than winter wheat in most areas, but still needs adequate time for fall growth and tillering to maximize yields.

WINTER WHEAT

Wheat is the latest maturing of the winter annuals. Winter wheat can provide excellent quality forage that generally supplies higher protein than winter triticale or cereal rye. If planning to harvest no earlier than late-May, winter wheat would be a good option. In the Midwest, the final date for planting winter wheat ranges from early September to Mid-October depending on what zone you are in. Winter wheat needs to be well established in the fall before the hard freeze date as winter kill can be seen if adequate growth does not occur.

Application

Cover Crop
Silage
Grazing
Grain

Seeding Rates

- Cereal Rye 80-120 lbs/acre.
- Winter Triticale 80-100 lbs/acre.
- Winter Wheat 80-100 lbs/acre.

Planting Time

Mid to late fall when conditions will allow germination before entering a dormant winter period in which it will vernalize

Seeding Depth

1 to 1 ½" into the seedbed.

