

ANNUAL RYEGRASS SEED PRODUCTION

Description & Adaptation

Annual (Westerwold) ryegrass is mainly used for annual hay or grazing applications, but it is also used for quick ground cover in some turf mixtures. Annual ryegrass is seeded in early spring and harvested mid-summer with similar management practices as wheat. Tolerates and thrives in excess moisture. Annual ryegrass is a great fit for mixed farms as its straw can be used for feed and bedding and its regrowth after harvest provides an excellent fall grazing opportunity.

Field Selection

It grows well in most regions of Western Canada and is well adapted to different soil types, ranging from light-textured sandy soils to heavy clay soils. The field must be free of residual herbicides such as Edge, Treflan and others. It is important to review the herbicide history of the field before planting. Clean fields are important to minimize weeds at harvest and earn top prices. Glyphosate application in the year prior to establishment will help eliminate perennial weeds.

Weed and Disease Control

Markets demand seed free of wild oats, quack grass and volunteer canola. There are good herbicide options for control of broadleaf weeds, but options for in crop control of grasses are minimal. Selection of clean fields is important to maximize seed quality. Annual ryegrass is not susceptible to common leaf or head disease, so fungicides are not required.

Production Benefits

- Large root mass improves soil tilth and water infiltration while helping manage soil erosion
- Straw residue can be used for feed and bedding
- Regrowth provides high quality fall grazing with excellent feed value and palatability.



Overview

Seeding Rate	15-18 lbs/ac
Seeding Depth	Max. ½ inch
Row Spacing	6 -12 inches
Seed Yield	1,000 - 1,800 lbs/ac
Seed Production Life	1 year
Companion Crop	None
Soil pH	5.0 – 8.0
Fertility	High nitrogen user
Swath Timing	End July to early August
Harvest Timing	7-10 days after swathing
Seed Moisture	Dry is 12%

<https://brettyoung.ca/seed-production/annual-ryegrass>
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