



Cover Crop/Forage Tech Sheet



Ray's Crazy Fall Mix

Diverse winter annual cover crop mix that can double as high energy forage

This is a versatile cool season mix made up of grasses, legumes, and brassicas that can be used as a short-term cover crop, a soil-building transition crop to renovate depleted soils, a grazing mix, and a wildlife food plot. It also contains several blooming species that, if left to grow and flower, will attract beneficial species. The mix is beneficial for both no-till and conventional-till soils and consists of all Non-GMO seeds.

Winter peas, hairy vetch and crimson clover grow through the winter and fix nitrogen. N production will be maximized if the hairy vetch and clover are left to grow to bloom in the spring.

Oats grow quickly in the fall, providing weed suppression, nutrient uptake, and shelter for the slower-growing species in the mix. The oats winterkill with hard frosts. The turnips and radishes also winterkill with a hard frost, but like the oats, grow quickly in the fall, suppressing weeds and scavenging nutrients with their deep tap roots. They also help to break pest cycles. Ryegrass and triticale grow over winter, anchoring and building soil with their dense, fibrous root systems. (Note: In the Piedmont and Coastal Plain VA, NC, SC regions, the oats and turnips may not winter kill depending on variety and winter hardiness.)

If grazing use is intended, increase the seeding rate. The crop can be grazed in late fall and/or early spring. The mix of species will provide an ideal balance of effective fiber and protein, if taken for forage when grasses reach boot stage.

If more emphasis is placed on the mix being a cover crop, let it grow until the clovers and vetch bloom. For maximum nitrogen production, wait until the legumes flower before grazing or harvesting.

At A Glance

Product Formula (by weight)

Austrian Winter Pea— 23.8%
Foragemaker 50 Oats— 20%
Triticale— 20%
Hairy Vetch— 12.6%
Crimson Clover— 10%
Marshall Ryegrass— 7.6%
Daikon Radish— 3.4%
Barkant Turnips— 2.6%

Establishment

Seeding Rate: 50 lbs/A (for forage or cover crop)

Seeding Depth: 1/2" - 1"

Seeding Dates: Late summer/early fall

Possible grazing dates (depending on weather and growing conditions):

Late fall, late spring

Cool Season Cover Crop Mix



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High Energy Forages and Soil Building Cover Crops



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Austrian Winter Pea

A winter hardy, purple-flowered pea that is designed to increase protein if grazed and/or as a nitrogen producer if allowed to flower.

Foragemaker Oats

A true forage type oat, Forage Maker is quite productive for grazing or cover crop. With good leaf to stem ratio, it makes a highly palatable and digestible forage. Will winter kill in many regions, but may not winter kill throughout the Piedmont and Coastal Plain VA, NC, SC regions. Even killed oat residue makes a good protective buffer over winter.

Triticale

Triticale anchors the mix as a strong performer for winter-hardiness, yield and quality. It grows

Crimson Clover

Legume. Crimson is the premier winter annual clover for both forage and nitrogen production. It produces high biomass and if allowed to flower, returns a high amount of nitrogen back to the soil.

Hairy Vetch

Legume. Hairy vetch works as a great cover crop for top soil conditioning and weed suppression. If allowed to flower, it returns a high amount of nitrogen back to the soil.

Marshall Ryegrass

With a dense, fibrous root system, ryegrass is a fantastic cover crop that also produces high biomass and great forage quality. Marshall has excellent winter hardiness for the southern re-

Barkant Turnip

An aggressive forage type turnip with great cold tolerance. It will winter kill in many regions but may survive the winter throughout the Piedmont and Coastal Plain VA, NC, SC regions.

Daikon Radish

With a deep taproot and large tuber, Daikon radish is great for increasing organic matter in the soil, breaking compaction and scavenging nitrogen and other inputs.



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Spring grazing Ray's Crazy Fall Mix in North Carolina

“If you look in the first picture [right] you can see the difference in winter wheat [foreground] and Ray's Crazy mix. Both were planted on the same day. Ray's produced five times as much bio-mass as the winter wheat. I've been very impressed. I've got about two acres of it and the cows (30 momma cows and calves) can probably graze at least 3 or more weeks on it. About one acre of it. I grazed sheep and goats during the winter until the first of April, then took them off and it came back to produce even more.

One problem we have is living in a higher elevation—around 2500 to 3000 ft—it's hard to get a good winter cover crop established and grow during the winter. As you could see from the photos the winter wheat [now substituted with triticale in the mix] was thin and small, this is normal for us. But the Mix really took off and continued to grow all winter.



Cool Season Cover Crop Mix



The radish and turnips were mostly gone by the time this picture was taken, but they did really well until the late winter cold hit around late Jan. or Feb. The sheep and goats loved grazing on them, they would stand and dig them up. The sheep and goats' body condition going into lambing and kidding was excellent.

I never thought that I would have much bio-mass this time of year, but I may have to bush-hog it just to get corn planted on time (around first of May). I will definitely recommend and use this mix again.”

- Tim Kelly, Clyde, NC



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