

# HAIRY VETCH Vetch

## Key Features

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Vetch is familiarly divided into common and hairy vetch. Common vetch is less winter-hardy than hairy vetch. Both are significant producer of nitrogen, especially for crops planted late in the spring. This makes it very attractive to organic growers. Another trait of vetch is that it lowers the ratio of carbon to nitrogen in mixes with cereal grains. This quickens the process of decomposition.

Better winter hardiness equates to more biomass. More biomass provides increased forage for livestock, more biomass for cover croppers, and increased weed suppression for all. Those desiring high nitrogen-fixing legumes for green manure, forage grazing, wildlife and pollinator attractants should find hairy vetch an improved option over other legumes that lack cold tolerance.

## Application

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Cover Crop  
Forage  
Pollinator

## Planting Time

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Fall

## Establishment

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Plant 3-6 weeks prior to the average first killing frost for optimum growth and winter survivability

Depth: ½-1½"

Drill or broadcast followed by a light disking. Vetch's growth is slow in the fall, but significant in the spring.

## Management Keys

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As an annual legume, hairy vetch may need to be terminated either mechanically or chemically when followed by a row crop. Some producers may find the late maturity of hairy vetch reduces the potential for undesired seed propagation found in earlier maturing cover crop species.

Hairy vetch can be terminated with a roller-crimper at full bloom stage when stems will fully crimp. Selective or non-selective herbicides will allow for no-till seeding into terminated stand.



## Seeding Rates

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Drilled	15-20#
Precision Planting	10-15#
Broadcast	25-35#
Aerial	25-35#

## Attributes

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

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

