

Lentil VNS

Key Features

Lentil plants are typically short, but can range from 8 to 30 inches in height, depending on growing conditions. Leaves are about 2 inches long with 9 to 15 leaflets. Just prior to flowering, new leaves will develop a short tendril at the leaf tip. At this time, the first flower clusters can be seen developing at the base of the leaves. If young lentil seedlings are injured by late spring frost, heat canker, or wind damage, the plants will re-grow from a scale node below the soil surface.

Lentils are a great option for an early season nitrogen builder and green manure crop. They are a strong nitrogen producer and help with water infiltration.

Lentil plants have an indeterminate growth habit. Plants continue to flower until they encounter some form of stress, such as drought, heat, frost, nitrogen deficiency, mechanical damage, or chemical desiccation.

Applications

Forage & Cover Crop

Planting Time

Spring & Fall

Establishment

Because of the lentil plant's short stature and the need to cut near ground level to capture all the pods, the physical condition of the field is important. Fields that are relatively rock free with level terrain are ideally suited to lentil production. Strong seedling vigor allows this species to easily establish, even through thick residue. It is very important to control perennial weeds in the year(s) prior to seeding lentil as lentils are a non-competitive crop and can be overtaken by established weeds.

Management Keys

Lentil is a cool season crop with a relatively shallow root system and is moderately resistant to high temperature and drought. Lentil requires at least moderate moisture; 6 to 10 in during the growing season to produce a full seed set. It is important to avoid water accumulation on the surface and water logging of the soil, especially at seeding time. Excess moisture aggravates disease problems and greatly delays maturity.



Seeding Rate

Drilled	14-16#
Precision Planting	4-6#

Seeding Depth

Plant 1/2" – 1 1/2"

Characteristics

N Fixation	4
Forage Quality	3
Soil Builder	1
Winter Survivability	0

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

