

Spring Cereal Forages

FORAGE OATS

Forage oats, especially EverLeaf 126 are late maturing and significantly higher yielding than most grain oat varieties. As a forage they are outstanding in both quality and yield. Being later in maturity, EverLeaf 126 can be utilized as either a nurse crop for establishing perennial forages or as a forage crop alone. EverLeaf 126 is a true spring oat with dark green foliage, an erect growth habit and very good standability. EverLeaf 126 has leaves that actually extend above the canopy at heading. EverLeaf 126 is a delayed heading oat, and much of its forage mass and quality come from an extended maturity. Since the plant is naturally vegetative for a longer period, biomass accumulation is extraordinary. At boot stage, EverLeaf 126 is highest in crude protein and in percentage of digestible fiber. At milk stage forage tonnage is optimized, with a corresponding reduction in crude protein and digestibility. EverLeaf 126 has shown resistance to rust and most other leaf and stem diseases. Evaluation is continuing on rust resistance and tolerance. EverLeaf 126 is susceptible to Barley Yellow Dwarf virus. A seedtreat insecticide can be beneficial for combating this problem. EverLeaf 126 has the same requirements as other spring-planted forage cereals.

FORAGE TRITICALE

Spring triticale matures earlier than forage oats. Spring triticale works well as a nurse crop for alfalfa or as a stand-alone forage product. Prairie Creek Seed triticale varieties are specific for forage production. They will be awnless or awnletted for palatability, especially if the forage would be delayed in harvest. Awns tend to diminish palatability because of the awns' or beards' stiffness and can irritate cattle when consuming the harvested forage. Triticale will mature at about the same time as a mid-season or late oat variety. Dry-matter yield will be close to high-yielding forage oats and fit into an operation with a high level of management. Best harvest timing will result in a very high-quality forage. Triticale works well as a companion forage to forage oats.

FORAGE BARLEY

Spring barley is the earliest maturing of the spring forage cereals to provide early harvest. With the earlier maturity comes a less robust plant. This is a benefit when using forage barley as a nurse crop. The canopy of barley allows for adequate light to reach the spring seeding while the root system provides erosion control. Dry matter yields of forage barley will be lower than the previous two cereals. Forage barley can be harvested as silage, baleage, or grazed alone or in a blend. Forage quality will be comparable to forage oats or forage triticale harvested at boot stage.



Seeding Rate

- Forage Oats 80-100 lbs/acre.
As a nurse crop for alfalfa 30-50 lbs/acre.
- Forage Triticale 100 lbs/acre.
As a nurse crop for alfalfa 40-60 lbs/acre.
- Forage Barley 80-100 lbs/acre.
As a nurse crop for alfalfa 40-60 lbs/acre.

Planting Time

Early spring when soils are consistently above 45° in the early morning.

Seeding Depth

1 to 1 ½" into the seedbed.

