

# Lifago

# Buckwheat

Lifago is a European variety of buckwheat that has large leaves for efficient weed smothering, smaller seeds, and later bloom. This variety impresses with high organic matter production and fast early development, and its leafy growth covers the ground very effectively. Lifago is ideal for mulch cropping as it freezes completely, leaving a residue over winter that leaves the soil ready for no-till planting. Lifago does not have adequate nectar production to attract pollinators and beneficial insects, and therefore is best placed as a summer smother crop or break crop. It extracts phosphorus and makes it more available to the following crop.

When planted after tillage, buckwheat can help weaken perennial weeds as well. The seed matures in about 2 to 3 weeks after flowering. Lifago can fit into any rotation any time in late spring through late summer, as temperatures allow.

Buckwheat has a low water requirement and typically doesn't do well in wet soils. It can tolerate poor fertility as well as a wide range of soil pH. But it is not shade tolerant. Buckwheat can improve soil quality, increasing short term soil tilth, and can be used to prepare fields for transplants. Biomass is very succulent, breaks down quickly, and is easy to no-till plant into. It reseeds easily but is generally not competitive with subsequent crops.

**Caution:** Don't plant buckwheat after using these herbicides on the preceding crop: Atrazine, Pursuit (imazethapyr), Sandea and Permit (halosulfuron) and Reflex (fomesafen)

## At A Glance:

- ◇ Larger leaves and smaller seeds than VNS Buckwheat; later bloom
- ◇ Not recommended for pollinators (VNS nectar production is better for attracting pollinators and beneficial insects.)
- ◇ Broadleaf cover crop
- ◇ Quick warm season "smother crop" to outcompete weeds and condition soil.
- ◇ Not recommended for forage use because of low dry matter yield and nutritional value.

## Establishment:

Seeding Rate: 25-35lbs/Acre as a cover crop; up to 50lbs/A if broadcasted.

Seeding Depth: 1/2"-1"

Planting Dates: Buckwheat is a warm season annual. Plant buckwheat after all danger of frost is past. Buckwheat can germinate and grow at soil temperatures as low as 45 degrees but optimal growth occurs at soil temperatures of 55 degrees or higher. Buckwheat is very susceptible to frost kill. It is very frost sensitive and it doesn't survive even light frosts. Therefore, be aware of early spring planting dates where we may get a frost after germination.