

Meadow Bromegrass

(*Bromus biebersteinii*)

also called

(*B. riparius* or *B. erectus*)



Meadow Bromegrass is a relatively new introduction into North America. A long lived perennial grass it is native to southeastern Europe, Turkey, and surrounding areas. It was introduced into the United States in the 1960's and initially was used as a pasture grass in the Northwestern USA and Western Canada. However the initial introduction proved to be a very poor seed producer and it was not until the late 1980's that higher seed yielding varieties of the original introduction were released.

Meadow Bromegrass is a relatively early maturing bunch grass spreading by short rhizomes. In contrast to smooth bromegrass to which it is normally compared regrowth of meadow bromegrass comes from existing tiller bases and regrowth rates are especially high in the initial stages of growth. Thus, its aftermath harvests are normally higher than those of smooth bromegrass. Leaves of meadow brome also have better frost resistance than those of smooth bromegrass which makes the grass suitable for grazing later into the fall.



Meadow bromegrass is best adapted to the cooler, moister areas within the wider adaptation of smooth bromegrass. It is said to be somewhat less winter hardy than smooth bromegrass and is also sensitive to flooding.

Preferred Seed Preferred Results

Establishment and Management

Meadow brome grass, either alone or in mixture with a legume can be seeded in spring or in early to mid August on a firm, well prepared seedbed. Seeds of meadow brome grass are larger than those of smooth brome grass. Also seed of meadow brome grass should be processed to remove the tip awns and hairs present on non processed seed.

Recommended seeding rates are 12-16 lbs / acre when seeded alone or 6-8 lbs / acre when seeded with a legume. The legumes normally grown with meadow brome grass in the northeast include alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil and ladino clover.

Meadow brome grass can be harvested as pasture, hay or silage. However, it has a growth pattern that makes it especially suited for short duration, high intensive, rotational grazing. Under a hay or silage system take the first cutting at the heading stage and utilize aftermath growth for late summer and fall grazing.

Forage quality data for meadow brome grass in the northeast is limited. However, data from western Canada suggests that for pasture or hay the forage quality of meadow brome grass is equal to or slightly lower than the quality of smooth brome grass at similar stages of maturity.

Fertilizer needs at seeding for meadow brome grass should be determined by soil test and are similar to those for smooth brome grass. If meadow brome grass is seeded with a legume, reduce or eliminate any nitrogen application at seeding.

For established meadow brome grass mixtures fertilize annually according to soil test but keep nitrogen applications to a minimum. For meadow brome grass grown without a legume, apply 100 to 200 lbs of nitrogen per acre per year, depending on manure applications, in split applications of 50 lbs per acre in early spring and 50 lbs per acre after each cutting or grazing.

Preferred Seed Preferred Results