



Baroptima

Tall Fescue

Tall fescue is a widely adapted cool season grass. In the transition zone, tall fescue is used extensively due to its superior summer production. Now there is a new generation of tall fescue available. They are soft-leafed tall fescues.

Soft Leaf Tall Fescue

(Festuca arundinaceae)

- Late maturing
- Softer leaves
- More palatable
- Better rust resistance
- Winter-hardy



These days there is a new generation of tall fescue available with much more palatable leaves, called soft leaf tall fescues.

Palatability

Palatability is hard to measure, but we do know a few things. In a sheep grazing trial conducted in France, soft leaf tall fescues were the only varieties the animals preferred. Sheep would eat the soft leaf tall fescues into the ground and waited for hours before starting to graze 'rough-leafed' varieties like Kentucky-31.

Improved rust resistance

Rust is fungus that can attack fescue and other species. Rust is completely harmless to livestock, yet it affects the palatability of plants and dry matter production. The newer soft-leafed tall fescues have been bred to be more rust resistant.

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Later heading date

Varieties with later heading dates are much easier to manage. They produce less and later seed heads in the spring, allowing for a longer grazing/harvest window. Later maturing varieties also show less re-heading during the season.

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Establishment and management

In order to maximize the benefits of these soft-leaved fescues, they should be managed correctly. The recommended seeding rate is 25-30kg/ha in a wellprepared seedbed. Brillion seeders or broadcasting the seed followed by a cult packer works best. If a regular drill is used, we suggest planting bi-directional. This means crossing the field twice, at an angle. Soft-leafed tall fescues are very well suited for intensive grazing, as well as cutting for hay or grass-silage. When planted for grazing, planting together with white clover is recommended. White clover fixes nitrogen, increases DM production and increases forage quality. Ideal in mixtures with perennial ryegrass, cocksfoot, phalaris, brome, perennial clovers and lucerne.

Specifications

Seeding Rate 25kg/ha

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