

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.

Baroptima

Soft Leaf Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinaceae*)

- More palatable
- Improved rust resistance
- Later heading date
- Softer leaves
- Winter-hardy



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Palatability

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

Improved rust resistance

Rust is another fungus that can attack fescue and other species. Rust is completely harmless to livestock, yet it affects palatability of the plants. Through plant breeding, the newer soft-leafed tall fescues are more rust resistant. Besides palatability, rust also affects dry matter production.

BAROPTIMA & BARIANE

Establishment and Management In order to maximize the benefits of these soft-leafed fescues, they should be managed well. The recommended seeding rate is 25kg/ha in a well-prepared seedbed. Billion 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 (4-6kg/ha). White clover produces nitrogen, increases DM production and increases forage quality. Ideal in mixtures with perennial ryegrass, cocksfoot, phalaris, brome, perennial clovers and lucerne.

Soft Leaf Tall Fescue

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

Later heading date

Varieties with later heading dates are much easier to manage. They will produce less and later seed heads in the spring, allowing for a longer grazing/harvest window. Later maturing varieties also show less re-heading in the season. Barcel and Barolex are considered late maturing varieties, while Bariane is the latest maturing tall fescue available on the market today. Bariane produces seed heads more than 10 days later than most other varieties.

Specifications

Sowing rate (pure) 25kg/ha

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