

Illinois Grazing Manual Fact Sheet

GENERAL

Pasture and Hayland Planting



Table 1 - Acceptable Planting Dates by Plant Suitability Zones

Type of seeding	Plant Suitability Zone ¹	Cool Season Species	Warm Season Species ²
Spring	I	Late Winter - June 1	Late Winter - June 15
	II	Late Winter - May 15	Late Winter - June 5
	III	Late Winter - May 15	Late Winter - June 1
Late Summer	I	August 1 - September 1	Not Recommended
	II	August 1 - September 10	Not Recommended
	III	August 1 - September 20	Not Recommended
Dormant	I	November 1 - Freeze-up	November 1 - Freeze-up
	II	November 15 - Freeze-up	November 15 - Freeze-up
	III	November 15 - Freeze-up	November 15 - Freeze-up
Frost ³	I	February 1 - March 15	February 1 - March 15
	II	February 1 - March 1	February 1 - March 1
	III	February 1 - March 1	February 1 - March 1

1- Refer to the "Plant Suitability Zones" map located in Section II, IL-eFOTG-Climate Data or refer to the link: <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/IL/c12plant.pdf>

2 - Dates to be used when warm and cool season natives are planted in mixture.

3 - Refer to Table 2 for applicable plant species. Frost seeding may be performed in December and January when snow cover is absent.

Acknowledgments

NRCS, Illinois, April 2003

Table 3; Crop Use Information (E=excellent, G=good, F=fair, P=poor)

Forage Species	Annual or Perennial	Hay	Silage	Continuous Grazing	Prescribed Grazing	Palatability	Biomass Production
Legumes							
Alfalfa	Perennial	E	E	P	E	E	NR
Alsike Clover	Short-lived perennial	G	G	P	G	E	NR
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Perennial	G	E	F	G	G	NR
Cicer Milk Vetch	Perennial	F	G	F	G	E	NR
Crownvetch	Perennial	F	G	F	G	G-F	NR
Hairy Vetch a	Winter annual	F	P	P	F	F	NR
Kura Clover	Perennial	G	G	E	E	E-G	NR
Lespedeza (Korean)	Annual	F	F	F	F	G	NR
Ladino Clover	Perennial	F	G	G-F	E	E	NR
Mammoth Red Clover	Short-lived perennial	F	G	P	P	G	NR
Medium Red Clover	Short-lived perennial	G	E	P	G	E	NR
Sweetclover	Biennial	F-P	G	P	F	F	NR
Cool Season Grasses							
Canada Wildrye	Perennial	F	F	P	E	E	NR
Kentucky bluegrass	Perennial	F	G-F	E	E	E	NR
Orchardgrass	Perennial	E	G	F	E	F-G	NR
Perennial ryegrass	Short-lived perennial	E	E	F-G	G-E	E	NR
Red Top	Perennial	F	F	F	F	G-F	NR
Reed canarygrass	Perennial	G-F	G	F	G	G-P	NR
Smooth brome	Perennial	E	E	F	E	E	NR
Tall fescue	Perennial	G-F	G	G-E	G-E	F-P	NR
Timothy	Perennial	E	E	F-P	G	E	NR
Virginia Wildrye	Perennial	F	F	F	E	E	NR
Warm Season Grasses							
Big Bluestem	Perennial	F	F	F	E	G-E	G
Caucasian Bluestem	Perennial	F	F	P	G	F	G
Eastern Gamagrass	Perennial	E	F	P	E	E	G-E
Indiangrass	Perennial	F	F	F	G	G	G
Little Bluestem	Perennial	P	P	F	G	G-F	NR
Prairie Dropseed	Perennial	F	F	F	G	G-F	NR
Sideoats Grama	Perennial	F	F	F	G	G	NR
Switchgrass	Perennial	F	F	F	G	G-F	E
Annual Forages							
Chicory	Short-lived perennial	P	P	G	G	G-P	NR
Foxtail/German Millet	Annual	F	F	F	G	G-F	NR
Hyb. Pearl Millets	Annual	F	F	F	G	G-F	NR
Rape	Annual	P	P	F	G	E	NR
SorghumXSudan	Annual	P	G	F	G	G-F	G-E
Sudangrass	Annual	P	F	F	G	G-F	G
Turnips	Annual	P	P	F	G	E	NR

a- Used primarily as a cover crop

NR = Not Recommended

Acknowledgments

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois, April 2003

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Illinois Planting Zones

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE



THESE BROAD ZONES ARE BASED ON CERTAIN PLANT GROWTH FACTORS INCLUDING AVERAGE JANUARY - JULY TEMPERATURES, FROST FREE DAYS AND ANNUAL RAINFALL.

THESE ZONES ARE USED AS A GUIDE IN SELECTING GRASSES, LEGUMES, SHRUBS, TREES AND VINES FOR PLANTING

PLANT SUITABILITY ZONES ILLINOIS

SOURCE:
DATA PROVIDED BY NRCS NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

ILLINOIS FIELD OFFICE TECHNICAL GUIDE
SECTION II - CLIMATIC DATA
JUNE 2002

Acknowledgments

NRCS, Illinois, April 2003



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