

Seeding Considerations

Rate Drilled	Rate Broadcast	Depth	Frost Seeding	Minimum Germination Temperature	Seeds
70-150 lbs/ac (78-168 kg/ha)	77-165 lbs/ac (86-185 kg/ha)	0.75-2 in (2-5 cm)	No	3°C (38°F)	6800 /lb (15,000 /kg)

Spring wheat can be a spring seeded crop, but produces less biomass than oats or barley. It may be seeded in late summer or early fall for nutrient (nitrogen) scavenging, ground cover and/or fall grazing opportunities. Earlier planting dates improve N scavenging ability.

Management Considerations

There are 9 varietal classes of spring wheat in Western Canada. Many of the commonly available hard red spring genetics have been bred for relatively short straw under grain production, while some of the soft white wheats have improved cover crop characteristics. Understanding what the variety was bred for (e.g. grain vs. silage) should inform selection. Spring wheat can have high forage quality if harvested at a vegetative stage. Cereals can accumulate nitrates after a period of stress (e.g. drought or killing frost) and/or high nitrate levels in the soil and should be tested before feed out.

Inter-seeding Potential



Volunteer Establishment



Nitrogen Concentration

0.5 - 5.2%

Dry Matter Yield

900 - 4000 lbs/acre

1008 - 4480 kg/ha

Termination

Spring wheat can be terminated by a killing frost, tillage or a chemical application. Tillage may require several passes. Termination should occur before seeds the reproductive stage to prevent volunteers.

References

- Cloverdale Soil Conservation Group. 1994. Final Report: Part 2 Reports, Newsletters and Bulletins.
- Elmy, K. 2020. Cover Cropping in Western Canada. Friesen Press.
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- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). 2012. Managing Cover Crops Profitably: 3rd Ed. National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA, University of Maryland & University of Vermont.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. (n.d.). Pacific Northwest Cover Crop Selection Tool.

Disclaimer

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