



NORTHSTAR SEED LTD.

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Annual Ryegrass Seed Production

Annual ryegrass is a cool season annual bunch grass that has a dense, branched, fibrous root system and is well suited to wet, heavy soils with a good tolerance to flooding. Annual ryegrass is planted in the early spring and harvested in August and is an excellent alternative to spring cereal crops. Early August harvest helps to make better use of machinery and time. Annual ryegrass is crop insurable in Manitoba.



Contracts: Are for 1 seed crop year.

Field Selection: Annual Ryegrass is suited to wet heavy soils. Fields with quackgrass or high wild oat populations should be avoided. Land treated with residual herbicides should be carefully considered because some chemicals may impair seed germination.

Seeding: At a rate of 12-16 lbs/ac and at a depth of about half inch. Solid seeding with an air seeder or drill into a firm seed bed works really well because of accurate seed placement and packing. It should be one of the first crops seeded on farm. There has also been some success with frost seeding late fall.

Crop Protection: There are a number of chemicals available for broadleaf and annual grass weed control. Broadleaf weeds can be controlled fairly easily but timing of application is critical for wild oat control. There is no control for quackgrass.

Harvest: Annual Ryegrass needs to be swathed which usually takes place late July-early August with combining 5-7 days later. Annual ryegrass tends to lay down readily which can make swathing difficult.

Yields: Have ranged from 800-1400 lbs/ac with an average yield being around the 1100 lb range and a top end potential of 1800 lbs/ac.

Post-Harvest: Annual Ryegrass seed should be put in an aeration bin to get moisture level below 12% which is safe for storage. The straw has some nutritional value and can be baled and used for feed. Regrowth makes a great grazing or silage opportunity and should subsequently be sprayed with glyphosate in the fall.

Contact Us

1(800) 430-5955

Gerry Duynisveld
Production Manager
(204)476-0644
gerryd@northstarseed.com

Darrel Theroux
Production Advisor
(204)212-0991
darrel@northstarseed.com

Bob Wilson
Production Advisor
(204)476-0645
bobw@northstarseed.com

Brett Wilson
Production Advisor
(204)476-6828
brettw@northstarseed.com

NORTHSTAR SEED LTD.

Box 2220
Hwy #16
Neepawa MB Canada
R0J 1H0

Phone: (204)476-5241
Fax: (204)476-3773
E-mail: info@northstarseed.com