

# Cover Crop Chart

**GROWTH CYCLE**

A = Annual  
 B = Biennial  
 P = Perennial

**PLANT ARCHITECTURE**

∩ = Upright  
 \* = Upright-Spreading  
 ≡ = Prostrate

**RELATIVE WATER USE**

☾ = Low  
 ☼ = Medium  
 ☀ = High

COOL

WARM

-- GRASS --

BROADLEAF

-- GRASS --

A BARLEY ☾							A AMARANTH ☾	A FOXTAIL MILLET ∩		
A OAT ☾	A/B CANOLA ☼	A/B CAMELINA ☼							A BUCKWHEAT ☼	A PEARL MILLET ☾
----- LEGUME -----										
A WHEAT ☼	A/P MUSTARD ☼	A PHACELIA ☼	A FIELD PEA ☼	A BERSEEM CLOVER ∩	A/B VETCH ☼	A SUNNHEMP ☼	A CLUSTER BEAN ∩	A QUINOA ☼	A PROSO MILLET ☼	
A CEREAL RYE ☼	A RADISH ☼	A FLAX ☼	A LENTIL ☼	A CRIMSON CLOVER ∩	P BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL ☼	A CHICKPEA ☼	A FAVA BEAN ∩	P CHICORY ☼	A GRAIN SORGHUM ☼	
A TRITICALE ☼	B TURNIP ☼	A KALE ☼	A LUPIN ∩	B/P RED CLOVER ∩	A/B SWEET CLOVER ∩	A COWPEA ☼	A MUNG BEAN ∩	A CUCURBITA ☼	A SUDAN GRASS ∩	
A ANNUAL FESCUE ☼	B BEET ☼	A SPINACH ☼	A/P MEDIC ☼	P WHITE CLOVER ∩	P SAINFOIN ∩	A/P FENUGREEK ☼	A SOYBEAN ∩	A SAFFLOWER ☼	A TEFF ☼	
P SALINE TOLERANT ∩	A/B CARROT ☼	A/B CHARD ☼	P ROUNDHEAD LESPEDEZA ∩	P KURA CLOVER ☼	P ALFALFA ☼	P PIGEONPEA ☼	A/P PEANUT ☼	A SUNFLOWER ☼	A CORN ☼	

# Cover Crop Chart

The Cover Crop Chart is produced and distributed by the staff of the Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory at Mandan, ND.

The Cover Crop Chart represents a compendium of information from multiple sources in the U.S. and Canada. Primary sources of information included the Midwest Cover Crops Council, USDA-SARE, USDA-NRCS PLANTS database, and relevant peer-reviewed journal articles. Designation of warm/cool season crops is based on prevalent growth habits and not photosynthetic pathway. Ranges for seeding depth take into consideration moisture conditions at planting and variation in soil texture. Values for crude protein and C:N ratio assume homogenous samples of aboveground plant material unless stated otherwise. Information on specific crops is occasionally generalized, approximate, and/or incomplete and may not reflect performance in on-farm conditions. USDA-ARS makes no guarantee to the performance of specific crops based on information provided herein. Content and data for crops were assembled by Holly Johnson and Mark Liebig with input from Dave Archer, Heather Dose, Wayne Duckwitz, Marvin Hatzenbuehler, John Hendrickson, Naeem Kalwar, Robert Kolberg, Nancy Jensen, Steve Merrill, Kristine Nichols, Delmer Schlenker, Marty Schmer, Eric Scholljegerdes, Don Tanaka, Cal Thorson, and Dawn Wetch. Chart design by Mark Liebig, Holly Johnson, and Jill Gunderson. The Cover Crop Chart was generated with input from producers and technicians in the Area IV Soil Conservation Districts of North Dakota and NRCS staff at the Bismarck and Dickinson Field/Area Offices.

• **Useful cover crop resources:**

- **Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Andy Clark (Ed.). Handbook Series Book 9, Sustainable Agriculture Network, Beltsville, MD.**
- **Midwest Cover Crops Council, [www.mccc.msu.edu](http://www.mccc.msu.edu)**
- **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, University of California-Davis, [www.sarep.ucdavis.edu](http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu)**
- **USDA-NRCS, PLANTS Database, [www.plants.usda.gov](http://www.plants.usda.gov)**

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Cover Crop Chart

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# Crop Sequence Effects

CROP RESIDUE	----- HIGH RISK CROPS (Crops with the worst performance following a particular residue) -----								
Barley	Barley								
Wheat	Wheat								
Canola	Canola	Mustard	Pea	Dry Bean	Flax	Safflower			
Mustard	Soybean	Sunflower							
Flax	Flax								
Pea	Pea	Flax							
Lentil	Lentil								
Chickpea	Buckwheat	Lentil							
Soybean	Canola	Wheat	Barley						
Buckwheat	Chickpea	Sunflower	Grain Sorghum	Sunflower					
Safflower	Safflower	Sunflower	Soybean	Mustard	Dry Bean				
Sunflower	Sunflower	Canola	Pea	Lentil	Buckwheat	Grain Sorghum	Corn	Wheat	Barley
Proso Millet	Proso Millet	Grain Sorghum	Buckwheat						
Grain Sorghum	Grain Sorghum	Proso Millet	Pea	Lenti	Wheat				
Corn	Corn	Wheat	Buckwheat	Grain Sorghum	Proso Millet				

Table adapted from Crop Sequence Calculator (v. 3.1). Software available for download at [www.mandan.ars.usda.gov](http://www.mandan.ars.usda.gov)

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# Barley

(*Hordeum vulgare* L.)

- Cool Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Low water use
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{3}{4}$  – 2 inches
- Crude protein: hay 10-15%, grain 11-15%
- Benefits from arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)
- Rated 'very good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil

◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



# Oat

(*Avena sativa* L.)

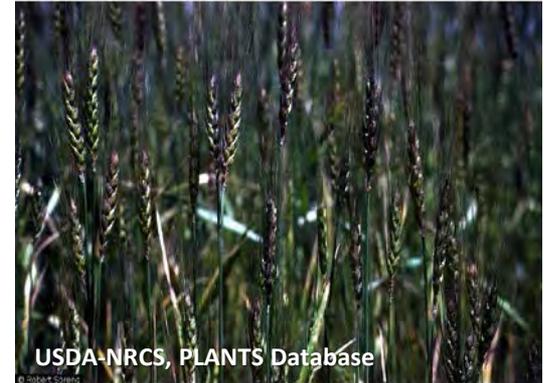
- Cool Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Medium water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 – 2 inches
- Crude protein: hay 9-15%, grain 13-18%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)
- Rated 'very good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil



# Wheat

(*Triticum aestivum* L.)

- Cool season, grass
  - Annual
  - Upright plant architecture
  - Includes spring and winter wheat varieties
  - Medium water use
  - Good to fair salinity tolerance
  - Seeding depth: ½ – 1 ½ inches
  - Crude protein: straw 4-10%, grain 12-16%
  - C:N ratio: leaf 15-29, stem 31-65, root 24-74 , straw 80-95 [*end of season*]
  - Benefits from arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
  - Self pollinator (wind)
  - Rated 'very good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
- ◆ [View table for known crop sequence effects](#)



# Cereal rye

(*Secale cereale* L.)

- Cool Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- High water use
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ – 2 inches
- Crude protein: straw 4%, grain 14%
- C:N ratio: 40 – 48
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)
- Rated 'very good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil



# Triticale

(*Triticale hexaploide* Lart.; *Triticosecale rimpau* Wittm.)

- Cool Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Fall and spring types available
- High water use
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 ½ – 2 inches
- Crude protein: hay 9-16%, grain 17%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Cool Season Grass

# Annual fescue

(*Vulpia myuros* L.; *Fetuca* sp.)

- Cool Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate names: Rattail fescue, Foxtail fescue
- Low water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ – 1 inch
- Crude protein: hay 8-10%
- Benefits from arbuscular mycorrhizal associations



# Saline Tolerant Grasses

- Cool Season, grass
- Perennial
- Upright plant architecture
- Low to moderate water use
- Moderate to high salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  – 1 inch
- Crude Protein: 7 – 19%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Many species are available in this category; each varies slightly in plant characteristics
  
- *See the next six slides for more detail*

# RS Hybrid Wheatgrass

(*Elymus hoffmannii* K.B. Jensen & K.H. Asay )

- Cool season, grass
- Perennial
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate name: Green wheatgrass
- Low water use
- Moderate to high salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: 7 – 12%
- RS hybrid wheatgrass is a hybrid between quackgrass (*Elymus repens*) and bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*)

*No Photo Available*

# Tall Wheatgrass

*(Thinopyrum ponticum (Podp.))*

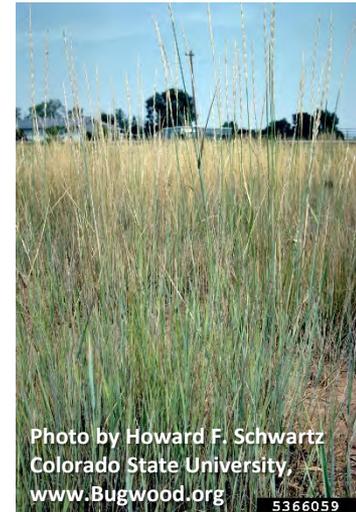
- Cool season, grass
- Perennial (introduced)
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate name: Rush wheatgrass
- Moderate water use
- Excellent salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ – 1 inch
  - \*shallower for finer textured soils
- Crude protein: 7 – 19%
  - vegetative >10%
  - late bloom 6%
  - fully mature 2-3%



# Intermediate Wheatgrass

(*Thinopyrum intermedium* (Host) Barkworth & D.R. Dewey)

- Cool season, grass
- Perennial (introduced)
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate name: Pubescent wheatgrass
- Low to moderate water use; drought tolerant
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½ – 1 inch
- Crude protein: 8 – 17%\*
  - \*Northern Plains: may fall below 4% at the end of the season
- Cross-pollinates.
- Spreads vegetatively; under ideal conditions, it can slowly spread into adjacent communities
- Persistence of stand is limited (typically < 5 yr)



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Saline Tolerant

Cool Season Grass

# Slender Wheatgrass

(*Elymus trachycaulus* (Link) Gould ex Shinnery)

- Cool season, grass
- Perennial, short-lived (native)
- Upright plant architecture
- Low water use; will not tolerate water-logged soils
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch
- Crude protein: 22 – 25% (Spring); less than 10% (fall)
- May form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Saline Tolerant

Cool Season Grass

# Russian Wildrye

(*Psathyrostachys junceus* (Fisch.) Nevski)

- Cool season, grass
- Perennial (introduced)
- Upright plant architecture
- Low water use
  - drought tolerant
  - does not tolerate flooding
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ – ½ inch
  - Sensitive to seeding depth – too deep will inhibit seed germination
- Crude protein: 5 – 17 %
- Difficult to establish

Photo by Larry Holzworth  
USDA-ARS, NRCS Idaho Plant Materials Program and  
USDA-ARS, Forage and Range Research Laboratory



# Alkaligrass

## (*Puccinellia* sp. Parl.)

- Cool season, grass
- Perennial
- Upright plant architecture
- Nuttall's alkaligrass, *Puccinellia nuttalliana* [Schult.] Hitch.
  - Native to semi-arid, North American zones
- Weeping alkaligrass, *Puccinellia distans* [Jacq.] Parl.
  - Introduced [Eurasia]
  - Highest salinity tolerance of this genus
- Low to moderate water use
  - Can survive arid areas as well as marsh, basin, or wetland zones
- Excellent salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ - ½ inch
  
- *This slide completes the review of saline tolerant grasses*



# Canola

## (*Brassica napus*)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
  - Major types:
    - Annual (spring-type)
    - Biennial (winter-type)
  - Upright and spreading plant architecture
  - Alternate name: Rapeseed
  - Medium water use
  - Good salinity tolerance
  - Seeding depth: ¼ – 1 inch
  - Crude protein: hay 16%, grain 21%, silage 12%, pasture 17%
  - C:N ratio: leaf 12-16, stem 21-37, root 24-43
  - Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
  - Rated 'very good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
  - Flowers attract pollinator
- ◆ [View table for known crop sequence effects](#)



# Mustard

(*Brassica sp.* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual or perennial
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Major types: Indian, Oriental, brown, yellow
- Related to crambe
- Low water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: hay 10%, grain 24-35%
- C:N ratio: 10 – 30
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Rated 'good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
- Plants from the *Brassica* group have potential to release compounds or metabolic by-products that work as bio-toxins against bacteria, fungi, insects, nematodes, and weeds
- Flowers may attract pollinators

◆ [View table for known crop sequence effects](#)



# Radish

(*Raphanus sativus* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Root crop
- Major types:
  - Oilseed (var. *oleiformis*)
  - Forage (var. *niger*): Daikon
- High water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: 26-30%
- C:N ratio: oilseed 19 – 20
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Rated 'very good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
- Flowers attract pollinators



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Cool Season Broadleaf

# Turnip

(*Brassica rapa* L. var. *rapa*)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Biennial
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Root crop
- High water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: tops 16%, root 12-14%
- Closely related to rutabaga
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Rated 'good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
- Flowers attract pollinators



# Beet

(*Beta vulgaris* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Biennial
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Root crop
- High water use
- Variable salinity tolerance, depending on beet type
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch
- Crude protein: tops 12-15%, root 7-10%
- C:N ratio: tops 11 – 14
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Rated 'good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
- Self pollinator (wind)
- Multiple sub-species including garden beets and sugar beets



# Carrot

(*Daucus carota* var. *sativus* L.)

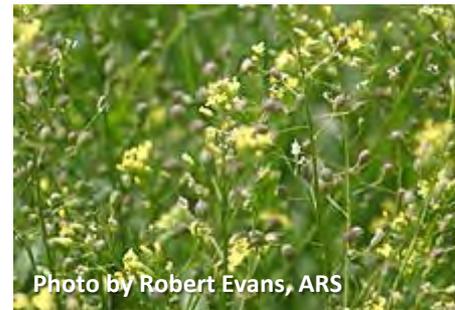
- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Major types:
  - Biennial (cultivated)
  - Annual (wild)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Root crop
- High water use
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{8}$  -  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch
- Crude protein: 10%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Plants may bolt and flower starting in second year of growth
- Flowers may attract pollinators



# Camelina

(*Camelina sativa* (L.) Crantz)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual, biennial
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate names: False flax, Gold-of-pleasure
- Low water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{8}$  –  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch
- Crude Protein: 46%
- C:N Ratio: stems 40-95; pods 25-70; seed 12-16
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Mainly a self pollinator but benefits from exposure to high population of pollinators
- Sensitive to imidazolinone and sulfentrazone herbicides



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Cool Season Broadleaf

# Phacelia

(*Phacelia tanacetifolia* Benth.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Low water use
- Low salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{8}$  –  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch
- C:N ratio: 10 – 15
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts beneficial insects



# Flax

(*Linum usitatissimum* L. )

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Medium water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½ – 1 ½ inch
- Benefits from arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators



# Kale

(*Brassica napus* L. var. *pabularia*)

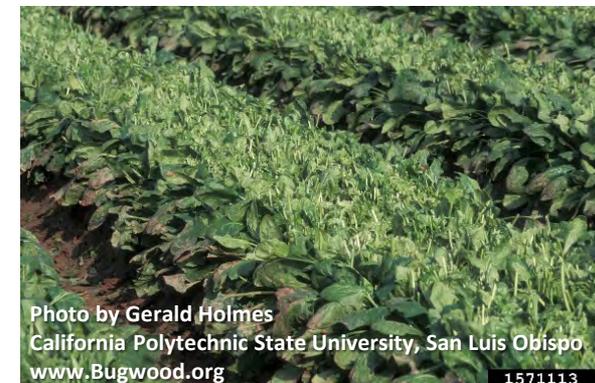
- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Major types:
  - Siberian
  - Russian
- Medium water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein:  $\approx 30\%$
- C:N ratio: 10 – 30
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations



# Spinach

(*Spinacia oleracea* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Low to medium water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein:  $\approx 20\%$
- C:N ratio: 6 – 8
- Sensitive to acid soils
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations



# Chard

*(Beta vulgaris* L. ssp. *cicla* (L.) W.D.J. Koch)

- Cool season, broadleaf
- Annual, Biennial
- Upright spreading plant architecture
- Alternate names: Swiss chard, silverbeet, perpetual spinach, spinach beet, crab beet, bright lights, seakale beet, and mangold
- High water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½ - 1 inch
- Crude Protein: 32%
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)



# Field pea

(*Pisum sativum arvense* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N fixation)
- Upright plant architecture (vine)
- Low water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 – 3 inches
- Crude protein: hay 14%, grain 24%, silage 15%
- C:N ratio: leaf 13-25, stem 27-83, root 17-27
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators

◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



Photo by Hans Kandel  
www.mccc.msu.edu



USDA-ARS, NGRPL

# Lentil

(*Lens culinaris* Medik.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Low water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 – 1 ½ inch
- Crude protein: hay 14%, grain 28%, silage 15%
- C:N ratio: leaf 11-21, stem 25-49, root 22-30
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self-pollinated but flowers may attract pollinators

◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Cool Season Legume

# Lupin

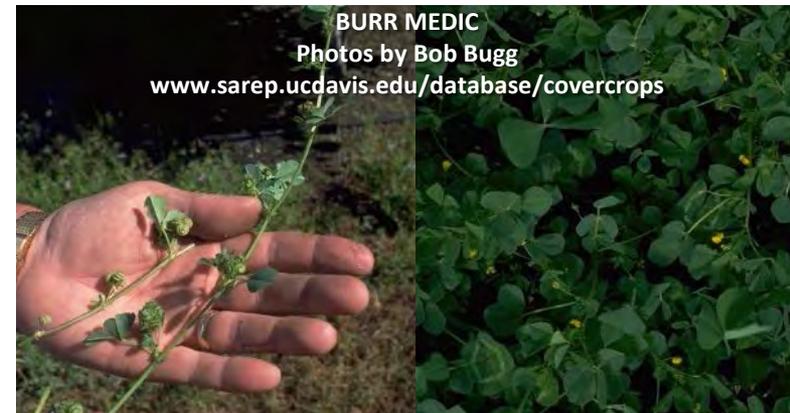
(*Lupinus sp.* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture
- Examples include blue, narrow-leaved, European yellow, white, Spanish, etc.
- Low water use
- Prefers acid soils
- Seeding depth: 1 – 2 inches
- Crude protein: silage 15%
- C:N ratio: leaf 12-30, stem 25-49
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators



# Medic (*Medicago* spp.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual or perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Over 35 known medic species exist. Common examples include barrel, black, & burr.
- Low water use
- Poor to fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ inch
- Crude protein: black medic 19-21%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators



# Roundhead Lespedeza

(*Lespedeza capitata* (Michx.))

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate names: Roundhead bush clover, bushclover, rabbit foot
- Low salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- C:N ratio:  $\approx 23$
- Crude Protein: 11%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations



# Berseem Clover

(*Trifolium alexandrinum* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate name: Egyptian clover
- Low water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  – 1 inch
- Crude protein: 27-29%
- C:N ratio: 18 – 23
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators



# Crimson Clover

(*Trifolium incarnatum* L.)

- Cool season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Medium water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ - ½ inch
- Crude protein: 18%
- C:N ratio: 16 - 19
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators



# Red Clover

(*Trifolium pratense* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Biennial; short-lived perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture
- Two types:
  - medium, perennial or biennial; (2-3 cuts per season)
  - mammoth (1 cut per season)
- Medium water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: 15%
- C:N ratio: 15 – 23
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators



Photo by Todd Martin (MSU-KBS)  
www.mccc.msu.edu



Photo by John Wright (Mississauga)  
www.mccc.msu.edu



Photo by Jeremy Singer  
www.mccc.msu.edu

# White Clover

(*Trifolium repens* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading or prostrate plant architecture
- 3 Types grouped by size:
  1. **Large:** tallest of the white clovers, upright architecture, high forage quality but less durable [var. Ladino]
  2. **Intermediate:** most common white clover, flowers earlier, and has a higher heat tolerance, upright architecture [var. Dutch white, New Zealand White]
  3. **Small:** lowest growing type, prostrate; survives grazing [var. Wild White]
- Medium water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ¼ inch
- Crude protein: 24 – 30%
- C:N ratio: 13 – 23
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators
- Aggressive growth in some regions or habitats; may displace desirable vegetation if not properly managed



# Kura Clover

(*Trifolium ambiguum* M. Bieb.)

- Cool season, broadleaf
- Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Prostrate plant architecture
- Also called Caucasian, honey, and pellet clover
- Moderate water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: 23 – 25%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal association
- Flowers attract pollinators



# Vetch

(*Vicia sp.*)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual or biennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Prostrate plant architecture (vine)
- Common examples include hairy, purple, and smooth vetch
- Low to medium water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 ½ – 2 ½ inches
- Crude protein: 13-20%
- C:N ratio: 10 – 19
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators

**Hairy Vetch**



**Chickling Vetch**



# Birdsfoot trefoil

(*Lotus corniculatus* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Perennial, short lived
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Prostrate plant architecture
- Low to medium water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: hay 16 - 22%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators



# Sweetclover

(*Melilotus* sp. L)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Annual or biennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Two types
  - yellow *Melilotus officinalis* L.
  - white *Melilotus alba* L.
- Upright plant architecture
- Moderate water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½ inch
- Crude protein: 11-18%
- C:N ratio: 12 – 23
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators



# Sainfoin

(*Onobrychis viciifolia* Scop.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture
- Medium to high water use
- Fair to poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch
- Crude protein: 13-20%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators



# Alfalfa

(*Medicago sativa* L.)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
- Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture
- High water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: 14-22%
- C:N ratio: 11 – 13
- Non-dormant cultivars can perform like an annual
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Good at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
- Attracts pollinators



# Sunnhemp

(*Crotalaria juncea* L.)

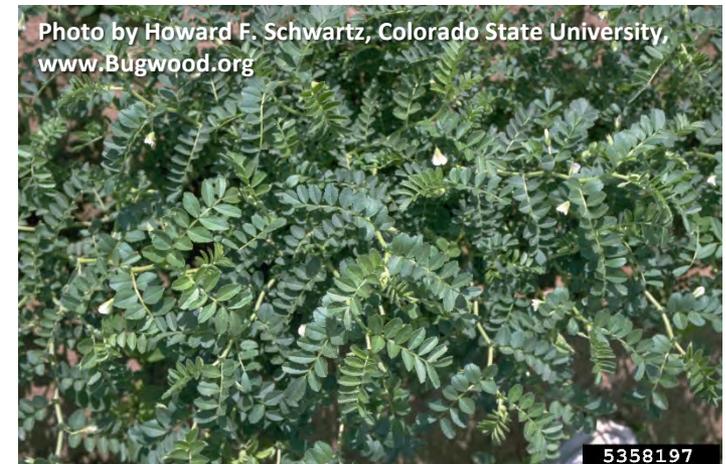
- Warm season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture
- Low to moderate water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½" – 2 ½" inches
- 'Good' N-fixation capacity
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinates (wind) as well as cross-pollinates (insects/birds)
- Rated 'Excellent' at controlling soil nematodes
- Used as a green manure, forage\*, or fiber crop
- Certain cultivars contain alkaloids which are poisonous to livestock; check before feeding to animals



# Chickpea

(*Cicer arietinum* L.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
  - Annual
  - Legume (N-fixation)
  - Two types
    - Desi
    - Kabuli
  - Upright and spreading plant architecture
  - Alternate name: garbanzo bean
  - Low water use
  - Poor salinity tolerance
  - Seeding depth: 1 ½ – 2 inches
  - Crude protein: straw 6%, grain 22%
  - C:N ratio: leaf 10-15, stem 26-56, root 16-27
  - Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
  - Flowers attract pollinators
- ◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



# Cowpea

(*Vigna unguiculata* L.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture (vine)
- Alternate names: Southern pea, black-eye pea
- Low water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{3}{4}$  – 1 inch
- Crude protein:
  - grain and leaves 19-30%
  - stems 13-17%
- C:N ratio: 18 – 22
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators



# Fenugreek

(*Trigonella sp.* L.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Annual/Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Two types:
  - cultivated [*T. corniculata*];
  - forage or sickle fruit [*T. foenum-graecum*]
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate name: Greek hay
- Low water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 – 2 inches
- Crude protein: 16 – 25%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)
- Used as a forage, spice, and for health benefits\*
  - \*contains nutraceuticals:
    1. steroidal sapogenin
    2. galactomannan
    3. isoleucine



# Pigeonpea

(*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.)

- Warm season, broadleaf
- Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Alternate names: Angola pea, Congo pea, dhal, no-eye pea, gungo pea, and red gram
- Low water use
- Moderate to high salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 ½ inch
- Crude protein: 28-36%
- C:N ratio: 20
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Mostly self-pollinated



# Cluster bean

(*Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* L. Taub)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Alternate names: Guar, guar bean, c
- Low water use
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 – 1 ½ inch
- Crude protein:
  - Straw 7 – 10%
- C:N ratio: 65 (residue)
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self-pollinated
- Can be used as a green manure or forage
- Plant extract (gum) has industrial uses



# Fava Bean

(*Vicia faba* L.)

- Warm season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright plant architecture (vine)
- Alternate names: Bell bean, horse bean
- Medium water use; poor drought tolerance
- Moderate salinity tolerance (depending on variety)
- Seeding depth: 2-4 inches
- Crude protein: 17%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators



# Mung bean

(*Vigna radiata* L.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading plant architecture
- Low to medium water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 ½ – 3 inches
- Crude protein: 16-23%
- C:N ratio: 10 – 15
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self-pollinated



# Soybean

(*Glycine max* (L.) Merr.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
  - Annual
  - Legume (N-fixation)
  - Upright and spreading plant architecture
  - Medium water use
  - Poor salinity tolerance
  - Seeding depth: 1 – 2 inches
  - Crude protein: hay 17%, grain 42%
  - C:N ratio: leaf 14, stem 39, root 34
  - Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
  - Self-pollinated but flowers may attract pollinators
- ◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



# Peanut

(Annual - *Arachis hypogaea* L.; Perennial – *Arachis glabrata* L.)

- Warm season, broadleaf
- Annual, Perennial
- Legume (N-fixation)
- Upright and spreading (annual) or prostrate (perennial) plant architecture
- Alternate name: Groundnut
- High water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 – 4 inches
  - \*Perennial peanuts are planted using rhizomes only
- Crude Protein: 13 – 20%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Mainly self-pollinate (wind); small % cross-pollinate
- Rated 'Efficient' at scavenging P & K from soil
- Perennial varieties used as cattle forage



Photo by Rebekah D. Wallace  
University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

**Annual Peanut - *Arachis hypogaea***



Photo by William M. Brown Jr.  
Bugwood.org

**Perennial Peanut - *Arachis glabrata***

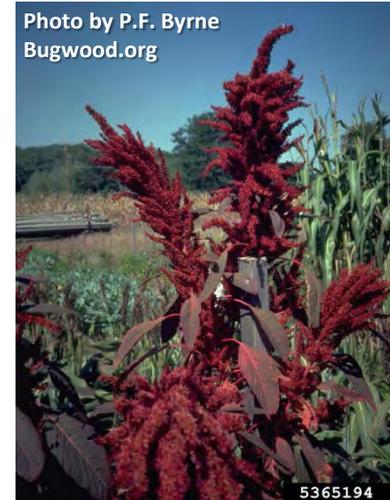


www.tropicalforages.info

# Amaranth

(*Amaranthus caudatus* L.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Over 50 species; some exhibiting herbicide resistance
- Low water use
- Tolerant of heat and drought
- Seeding depth: ½ – 2 inches
- Crude protein: ≈14%
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self-pollinated (wind)
- Flowers may attract pollinators



◆ Back to Cover Crop Chart

Warm Season Broadleaf

# Buckwheat

(*Fagopyrum esculentum* Moench; *Fagopyrum sagittatum* Gilib)

- Cool Season, broadleaf
  - Warm season growth characteristics
  - Annual
  - Upright plant architecture
  - Medium water use
  - Poor salinity tolerance
  - Enhances soil P availability
  - Seeding depth: ½ inch
  - Crude protein: straw 5%, grain 13%
  - C:N ratio: leaf 8-10, stem 12-32, root 28-47
  - Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
  - Attracts pollinators
- ◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



# Quinoa

(*Chenopodium quinoa* Willd. )

- Warm season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Moderate water use
- Good salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½ - 1 inch
- Crude protein: 14%
- C:N ratio: 14-25
- Does not form arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinates (wind); up to 15% may cross-pollinate
- Not susceptible to cereal diseases; slightly vulnerable to soil nematodes
- No registered herbicides for quinoa at this time



# Chicory

(*Cichorium intybus* L.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Perennial
- Upright and spreading plant architecture (vine)
- Alternate names: French endive, succory
- Medium water use
- Seeding depth:  $\frac{1}{8}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- Crude protein: 10-32%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators
- Rated 'very good' at scavenging nitrogen from the soil
- Highly invasive



# *Cucurbita sp.*

## *Family*

- This is a broad grouping including squash, gourd, cucumber, melon, and pumpkin
- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Prostrate plant architecture (vine)
- Seeding depth: ½ – 1 inch
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Attracts pollinators
- Can be used for weed suppression as a ‘smother crop’



Photos by Howard F. Schwartz  
Colorado State University,  
[www.Bugwood.org](http://www.Bugwood.org)



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Warm Season Broadleaf

# Safflower

(*Carthamus tinctorius* L.)

- Warm Season, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- High water use
- Good salinity tolerance
- Deep rooted
- Effective at 'mining' mobile nutrients deep in the soil profile
- Seeding depth: 1 – 1 ½ inch
- Crude protein: hay 10-13%, grain 18%
- C:N ratio: leaf 21, stem 56, root 73
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators

◆ [View table for known crop sequence effects](#)



# Sunflower

(*Helianthus annuus* L.)

- C3 plant with warm season growth characteristics, broadleaf
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- High water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Deep rooted
- Effective at 'mining' mobile nutrients deep in the soil profile
- Seeding depth: 1 – 3 ½ inches
- Crude protein: silage 11-12%, grain 20-28%
- C:N ratio: leaf 11-14, stem 41-46, root 50-68, flower 14-19
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Flowers attract pollinators

◆ [View table for known crop sequence effects](#)



# Foxtail Millet

(*Setaria italica* L.)

- Warm Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Low water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 inch
- Crude protein: hay 15%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)



# Pearl Millet

(*Pennisetum glaucum* L.)

- Warm Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Low water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½ – 1 inch
- Crude protein: hay 13%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)

◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



# Proso Millet

(*Panicum milaceum* L.)

- Warm Season, grass
  - Annual
  - Upright plant architecture
  - Medium water use
  - Poor salinity tolerance
  - Seeding depth: 1 inch
  - Crude protein: hay 10%
  - C:N ratio: leaf 12-16, stem 12-35, root 17-26
  - Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
  - Self pollinator (wind)
- ◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*



# Grain Sorghum

## (*Sorghum bicolor* L. Moench)

- Warm Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate name: Sorghum-sudan grass
  - \*Grain sorghum and sudan grass were formerly separate species that have been combined. They are separated in the chart due to different plant attributes.*
- Medium water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 – 2 inches
- Crude protein: hay 7%, stover 5%, grain 10%
- C:N ratio: leaf 11-17, stem 10-27, root 22-30
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)
- Stress conditions that limit growth (e.g., drought, frost) can contribute to prussic acid accumulation in leaves

◆ ***View table for known crop sequence effects***



# Sudan grass

## (*Sorghum bicolor* L. Moench)

- Warm Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Alternate name: Sorghum-sudan grass
  - \*Grain sorghum and sudan grass were formerly separate species that have been combined. They are separated in the chart due to different plant attributes.*
- Medium water use
- Fair salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: 1 inch
- Crude protein: hay 7-11%, silage 6-17%
- C:N ratio: 48 - 63
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Rated 'Excellent' at nutrient scavenging
- Self pollinator (wind)
- Stress conditions that limit growth (e.g., drought, frost) can contribute to prussic acid accumulation in leaves
- Known alleopathic effects on annual ryegrass



# Teff

(*Eragrostis tef* (Zuccagni) Trotter)

- Warm Season, grass
- Annual
- Upright plant architecture
- Medium water use
- Poor salinity tolerance
- Seeding depth: ½ inch
- Crude protein: 10-18%
- Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
- Self pollinator (wind)



◆ [Back to Cover Crop Chart](#)

Warm Season Grass

# Corn

(*Zea mays* L.)

- Warm Season, grass
  - Annual
  - Upright plant architecture
  - High water use
  - Poor salinity tolerance
  - Seeding depth: 1 – 2 inches
  - Crude protein: grain 9-10%, stover 5%, silage 8-11%
  - C:N ratio: stalk 11-65, leaf 13-20, root 20-49
  - Forms arbuscular mycorrhizal associations
  - Self pollinator (wind)
- ◆ *View table for known crop sequence effects*

