

Annual Ryegrass for Beef and Dairy

Annual Ryegrass For Beef

- Provides high-quality forage
- Handles wet soil well
- Establishes quickly

“The quality of annual ryegrass is what I really like.”

Wes Green, Green’s Diamond G Farm, Atlanta, Illinois Raises beef cattle, sells seed and hay, custom bales and Als cows.

Wes Green: Using Annual Ryegrass for Ten years for Cow-Calf Herd

We use annual ryegrass when transitioning between alfalfa. For example, annual ryegrass gets seeded in with a cereal grain. Then the next summer I’ll seed sorghum sudan grass, followed by alfalfa the next year.

It doesn’t take much time for stand establishment. The roots of annual ryegrass loosen the soil really well, which helps with compaction, and, hopefully, it will also capture nitrogen and phosphorus in the soil.

Annual ryegrass also handles wet fields really well. In 2014, a cattleman had a field of oats and alfalfa that drowned out. I recommended that he seed annual ryegrass into that wet field and it did well. His cows grazed it off.

If I’m drilling annual ryegrass in a mix with other seeds, I will use 15-20 pounds of ryegrass. But if I’m seeding annual ryegrass only, then I will seed 30-35 pounds per acre because the cows will graze it.



For more information, including a detailed management guide for ryegrass as a cover crop, check the website of the Oregon Ryegrass Growers Seed Commission:

Oregon-Quality ANNUAL RYEGRASS

Annual Ryegrass for Dairy *(Continued)*



Annual Ryegrass For Dairy

- Ryegrass roots anchor the soil
- Improves water infiltration
- Works well on wet bottom ground

Iowa dairy farmer Dave Wise: Annual Ryegrass Works Well on Hills and Bottom Ground

I like the root system of annual ryegrass and its ability to anchor the soil and to improve water infiltration. The root mass and the cover that keeps the soil from eroding are just huge benefits.

I've drilled annual ryegrass immediately after chopping corn silage on both hilly, highly erodible fields and on bottom ground.

I first tried annual ryegrass in 2011, drilling 40 acres. Now, I seed it on continuous corn ground chopped for silage. In 2014, annual ryegrass seeded on bottom ground took off very well and overwintered well, too.

No-till drilling is a no-brainer if you have a drill. If you can seed annual ryegrass right after chopping corn silage, then you are ahead of the game compared to waiting to drill after combining corn for grain.



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RyegrassCovercrop.com