



Native Grass Seeding

Service provided by the SWCD

The SWCD can provide the landowner with a tractor and driver for the planting or it can be planted by the landowner. If it is to be rented without a SWCD driver and tractor an equipment release for will need to be signed by the landowner. SWCD staff will assist you in the planting of native grasses by providing the following:

- Transport the drill to your location
- Calibrate the drill for your seed mixture
- Troubleshooting or answering questions
- Drill the seed

Will conventional drills plant native grasses?

If you are planning to plant native grasses (warm season grasses) on your conservation easements be aware that many of these grasses do not establish well with conventional methods because:

- Seed planted too deep will not germinate
- Seed is too fine and passes through conventional drills
- Seed is too fluffy and does not pass through conventional drills

Establishment

- Firm seed bed is crucial. Corn/Soybean stubble is a perfect medium to drill into.
- Spray the site before you seed. Then seed 3-7 days after you spray.

Tips for drilling

Slow down - Planting native grass seed should be done at 3-5 MPH. This ensures proper seed placement, higher germination rates, and reduces packing and clumping of fluffy seed.

Proper depth - The proper depth for planting is 1/4 inch. Seed planted deeper than 1/2 inch will probably not germinate.

Filling the seed box - Fill the seed box loosely. Packed seed will cause the calibration to be inaccurate.

Soil moisture at planting - If the soil is wet enough to stick to the drill coulters, it is too wet to plant. Fluffy native grass seed will stick to the soil on the coulters and result in poor germination or an uneven stand of native grass.

Monitor the drill - Make sure the drop tubes are not clogged. If a tube is clogged, unplug it immediately.

Recheck the rate - Check the rate during planting to make sure the calibration is accurate.

Transporting to the next field - Seed settles and packs when the drill is moved while out of gear. If you relocate to the next field, manually fluff the seed in the drill box before planting again.

Rates:

Landowner Rents- \$75 min . \$10/acre. plus \$300 damage deposit.

SWCD Seeds- \$150 min.

3-5 ac- \$50/ac

5.1-9.9 ac- \$40/ac

10+ac- \$30/ac