

Alfalfa

Medicago sativa



Description

High-yielding, high-quality perennial legume with good summer production. Provides multiple cuttings during growing season. Grows 2 to 3 feet tall.

Uses

Hay, haylage, pasture.

Advantages

High yield and quality, more productive during summer than other cool-season forages. Palatable to livestock.

Disadvantages

Requires well-drained, fertile soils and better management for good yield and persistence. Potential for bloat. Alfalfa weevil and potato leafhopper are economic pests.

Seeding

Rate: 12-20 lb/a

Depth: ¼-½ in

Date: Mar 1-Apr 15/Aug 1-Sep 15

Harvest

First harvest: May 1-May 15

Annual yield: 3-6 tons dry matter/a



Alfalfa leaflets are longer and narrower than red clover, do not have a prominent watermark, or V-shaped pattern, on the leaflets like red clover, and are serrated only at the tip. Alfalfa can have purple or yellow flowers.