

# Characteristics of Forage and Pasture Species Grown In Vermont



Species	Soil Moisture Adaptation	Soil Fertility Adaptation	Drought Tolerance	Periods Of Production	Relative Maturity <sup>1</sup>	Growth Habit	Height Classification
<b>Cool-Season Grasses</b>							
<b>Kentucky Bluegrass</b>	Well-drained to moist	Good to medium	Poor	Early spring and late fall	Early	Dense sod - rhizomatous	Short
<b>Timothy</b>	Well-drained to moist	Medium to fair	Poor	Late spring and fall	Medium-late to late <sup>2</sup>	Bunch	Tall
<b>Smooth Bromegrass</b>	Well-drained	High to good	Good	Spring, summer and fall	Medium-late	Open sod - rhizomatous	Tall
<b>Orchardgrass</b>	Droughty to moist	Medium to fair	Good	Early spring, summer and fall	Early to medium <sup>2</sup>	Bunch	Tall
<b>Reed Canarygrass</b>	Droughty to wet	Medium to fair	Very good	Early spring, summer and fall	Medium-late	Open sod - rhizomatous	Tall
<b>Tall Fescue</b>	Droughty to moist	Medium to fair	Good	Early spring, summer and fall	Medium-late	Bunch <sup>3</sup>	Tall
<b>Perennial Ryegrass<sup>4</sup></b>	Well-drained to moist	Good to medium	Poor	Early spring and late fall	Early to medium <sup>2</sup>	Bunch	Short to medium
<b>Festulolium<sup>4</sup></b>	Well-drained to moist	Good to medium	Poor	Early spring and late fall	Early	Bunch	Medium

<sup>1</sup> Maturity classification refers to the relative time of heading and depends not only on species but also on variety.

<sup>2</sup> There is a wide maturity range amongst varieties for timothy, orchardgrass and perennial ryegrass.

<sup>3</sup> The growth habit of tall fescue is primarily as a bunchgrass but some varieties can produce short rhizomes under intense cutting or grazing management.

<sup>4</sup> Best adapted to locations with mild winters or where snow cover is reliable, promoting longer stand life.

## Characteristics of Forage and Pasture Species Grown In Vermont (continued)

Species	Soil Moisture Adaptation	Soil Fertility Adaptation	Drought Tolerance	Periods Of Production	Relative Maturity <sup>1</sup>	Growth Habit	Height Classification
<b>Warm-Season Grasses</b>							
<b>Switchgrass</b>	Droughty to moist	Poor to fair	Excellent	Summer	Very late <sup>2</sup>	Tufted with rhizomes	Tall
<b>Big bluestem</b>	Droughty to moist	Poor to fair	Excellent	Summer	Very late <sup>2</sup>	Tufted with rhizomes	Tall
<b>Legumes</b>							
<b>Alfalfa</b>	Well-drained	High to good	Very good	Spring, summer and early fall	Medium-early	Bunch	Tall
<b>Red clover</b>	Well-drained	Good to medium	Fair	Spring, summer and fall	Medium	Bunch	Tall
<b>Birdsfoot trefoil</b>	Droughty to wet	Medium to fair	Good	Spring, summer and early fall	Medium-late to late	Bunch	Medium <sup>3</sup>
<b>White clover, common</b>	Moist	Medium	Poor	Spring and fall	Medium	Spreading by stolons	Short
<b>White clover, Ladino</b>	Moist	Good to medium	Poor	Spring, summer and fall	Medium	Spreading by stolons	Short to medium
<b>Alsike clover</b>	Most to wet	Fair	Poor	Spring, summer and fall	Medium	Bunch	Medium to tall
<b>Cicer Milkvetch</b>	Dry to wet	Poor to fair	Very good	Spring, summer and fall	Medium-late to late	Spreading by rhizomes	Tall

<sup>1</sup> Maturity classification refers to the relative time of heading (grasses) or flowering (legumes) and depends not only on species but also on variety.

<sup>2</sup> Warm-season grasses mature in mid- to late summer depending on species.

<sup>3</sup> Height of BFT depends largely on variety (Empire types are short suited for pasture and Viking types are upright suited for hay or rotational pasture).