

Planting Preparation Methods



OZARK NATIVE SEED
Pasture. Prairie. Restoration.

ozarknativeseed.com
sales@ozarknativeseed.com
573-201-5088



Preparation is Key. Ensuring Success of Your Native Stand.

There are many ways to ensure success with your native warm season grass planting. Whichever way is chosen, good preparation is key.

The planting success depends on two things:

1. **Good seed to soil contact**
2. **Weed control**

Each planting will be different. The site, species, existing vegetation and timeframe will determine what method to use.

When converting an existing tall fescue pasture to native warm season grasses, multiple herbicide applications may be required to kill the fescue stand and reduce its presence as a weed in the native grasses.

Other options are to utilize selective herbicides and native species tolerant to the herbicides to provide control of the tall fescue.

These methods will be outlined to help you make an educated decision based on your unique needs.

Please contact us with any questions you may have. Your success is our success and we want to help you along the way.

*Ozark Native
Seed Team*

Planting Methods Covered

Spray, Smother,
Spray

Fall Spray,
Spring Spray

Single Spray
Method

Previously
Cropped Areas

Tillage

Spray, Smother, Spray

This method is used extensively when converting pastures from one species to another. When the previous crop will potentially be a weed in the new planting, this is a good approach to consider.

This approach uses multiple herbicide applications and planting a cover crop to suppress weeds.

When a diverse mix is being planted, and no follow up sprays are practical, consider using a multi-season approach, like below.

May (Year 1)

1. Spray existing vegetation with a non-selective herbicide such as glyphosate, during active growth.
2. Plant a summer annual cover crop such as sudangrass or cowpeas after the initial herbicide application.

TIP: *This can be used for pasture or hay.*

Fall (Year 1)

1. Apply glyphosate in the fall to terminate the cover crop and any weeds or previous crops that may remain.
2. Plant a winter annual cover crop such as wheat or winter pea after the summer annual has begun to die. Utilize this cover crop as forage if needed.

TIP: *Avoid using cereal rye as it can reduce the germination of your native warm season grasses the following spring.*

Diverse Planting (Wildflowers & Grass)

December - February (Year 2)

TIP: *If adequate weed control has been achieved by the fall, proceed with the winter planting.*

1. Burn off excess material. This ensures the seeds that are being sown have good seed to soil contact.
2. Plant the diverse native mix after burning.

Imazapic Tolerant Grass Planting

March (Year 2)

1. Apply glyphosate in late march to terminate the cover crop and any weeds that may be present.
2. You can plant your native warm season grass immediately after this application.



For native grasses that are tolerant of the herbicide imazapic such as **Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, and Indiangrass** you can rely on the fall and winter portion of the plan outlined above.

The final spray in late march should include imazapic (Plateau®, Panoramic®, and others).

This herbicide provides residual control of germinating tall fescue seedlings and can also provide another mode of action and better control to any living fescue that may still be present.

Always follow all herbicide label directions and restrictions for use. Not all products may be labeled for your crop or area.

Fall Spray, Spring Spray

This method is best used for plantings of grasses tolerant of imazapic (Plateau®, Panoramic®, and others). Common species that are tolerant of this herbicide include **Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, and Indiangrass.**

Fall (Year 1)

1. When tall fescue has begun vigorous fall growth mow or graze low to stress the plants.
2. Allow the fescue to regrow for a week and apply 1 – 2 quarts of glyphosate per acre.

January (Year 2)

1. Allow all existing vegetation to die and burn in January.

Remaining fescue seedlings and winter annual weeds should emerge following the burn and can be sprayed again if needed.

March (Year 2)

1. Make another herbicide application to prepare the area for planting. This application should include glyphosate and 4 to 6 ounces of imazapic per acre.
2. Plant your native warm season grasses following this application.

Timely planting will allow the seedlings to begin growing before other weeds begin to emerge.

Single Spray Method

This preparation method utilizes a single application of glyphosate and imazapic (Plateau®, Panoramic®, and others) when planting imazapic tolerant grasses such as **Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, and Indiangrass.**

This should not be the first planting preparation method you choose if possible. Control of existing vegetation will be limited and establishment success may be lower as a result.

- Glyphosate should be applied at the maximum labeled rate
- Imazapic applied at 6 to 8 ounces per acre.

These rates should control existing fescue, but you may have to explore other control measures if tall fescue continues to be a problem. Burning after fescue has died and before no-till planting can add to the success of this method.

Previously Cropped Area

Generally there will be few perennial weed issues. Most weeds encountered will be summer annuals such as ragweed and pigweed species. Consider planting following a soybean crop to take advantage of lower amounts of crop residue.

Broadcasting during the dormant season can be used for native warm season grasses and wildflowers.

No-till is best used if you choose to plant grasses in later spring to ensure adequate seed to soil contact.

REMEMBER: Past herbicide applications that may negatively impact your new seeding. Some common corn and soybean herbicides may have long residual effects in the soil that can negatively impact seed germination.

Tillage

As a rule, tillage should generally be avoided on most sites. Erosion is greatly increased with tillage and any site with a grade over 5% should not be tilled.

- Weed pressure can be increased with tillage due to weed seeds being brought to the surface.
- If broadcasting seed on tilled soil consider rolling before and after broadcasting. This will keep seeds from being planted too deep and create better seed and soil contact.

Always follow all herbicide label directions and restrictions for use. Not all products may be labeled for your crop or area.