

Prairie Plantings: Native Grasses and Forbs

Winona Co. SWCD



INFORMATION NEEDED:

1. Soil type:	a. dry(mesic)	b. medium	c. wet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, short grass prairies will be found on the dry soils, and tall grass prairies will be found on the mesic to wet/mesic soils. 			
2. Size of planting:	a. square ft.	b. acres	



SITE PREPARATION:

1. Clear site of existing vegetation using a method from below, or following recommendations from seed source
2. Plant directly into corn or bean ground with good existing weed control.
3. No herbicide (a or b):
a. Repeated cultivation over several months (not recommended on erodible soils).
b. Place dark plastic on ground for extended period of time (good for small sites).
4. Herbicide:
a. Spray with a short-duration, non-specific herbicide in September. (Round-up at 1-2 qt. /acre, or an equivalent product, follow label.)
b. Re-spray or spot spray prior to planting, if needed.

PLANTING EQUIPMENT:

Hand seeding:	Mechanical seeding:
1. Hand broadcast onto loose soil.	1. Truax, no-till drill for existing sod or crop stubble.
2. Lightly rake.	2. Brillion seeder, with brushes; sites that needed tillage prior to planting.
3. Pack the seedbed to provide a firm seedbed for good seed to soil contact.	3. ViCon broadcast seeder. Pack tilled soils to provide a firm seedbed for good seed to soil contact.

- Because of the unique characteristics of the native grass and forb seeds, the equipment needed for these plantings must be set-up specifically to handle native grass and forb seeds.

PLANTING DATES:

Grasses:	• Best if spring planted (May 15 ó June 30).	• Grass seeds should be at ½ inch depth.
Forbs (Wildflowers):	• Best if fall planted (November 1 to freeze-up).	• Forb seeds should be at no more than ¼ inch depth.
Grass/Forb Mixes:	• Spring or fall (May 15 ó June 30, or November 1 to freeze-up).	• Grass/forb mixes should be at no more than ¼ inch depth.

MAINTENANCE:

First year (if weedy):	Mow 2 ó 3 times to a 4 ó 5 inch height, when weeds reach 10 ó 12 inches high to allow sunlight to reach seedlings.
Second year (if weedy):	Mow to an 8 ó 10 inch height in July.
Third year:	Conduct a controlled burn this year, and every 3 ó 5 years thereafter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burning helps set back non-native vegetation, reduces buildup of thatch, and stimulates native prairie plants. A running fire permit from DNR Forestry is required. Have plenty of help, and proper equipment to conduct a safe controlled burn. A mowed or dirt firebreak around the perimeter of the planting is often needed for a safe burn. Working with an experienced, burner is best. 	

SEED MIXES:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more diverse the planting, the better it is for water quality, wildlife habitat, and stand health and longevity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-5 grass species and 15-40+ forb species is best.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each program has certain seed source, seeding rates, and seed mix requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the resources below for seed mix information on your project.

SEED SOURCE: For State Programs, seed source should be as close to the project area as possible. **For Winona County plantings:**

1. **Minnesota Ecological Sub-sections – Rochester Plateau & Blufflands:**
http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/vegetation/Ecological_Subsections.pdf

PRAIRIE MOON NURSERY 31837 Bur Oak Lane Winona, MN 55987	Phone: (507) 452-1362 or (866) 417-8156 Fax: (507) 454-5238 info@prairiemoon.com www.prairiemoonnursery.com
SHOOTING STAR NATIVE SEEDS 20740 County Road 33 Spring Grove, MN 55974	Phone: (507) 498-3944 Fax: (507) 498-3953 ssns@springgrove.coop www.shootingstarnativeseed.com



2. **Minnesota Ecological Section – Paleozoic Plateau:** Same as above.
3. **Within 75 Miles of project:**

FEDER'S PRAIRIE SEED COMPANY 1740 Industrial Drive Blue Earth, MN 56013	Phone: (507) 526-3049 Fax: (507) 526-3509 feder@bevcomm.net www.federprairieseed.com
ION EXCHANGE NATIVE SEED AND PLANT NURSERY 1878 Old Mission Drive Harper's Ferry, IA 52146-7533	Phone: (563) 535-7231 or (800) 291-2143 Fax: (563) 535-7362 sales@ionxchange.com www.ionxchange.com
PRAIRIE RESTORATIONS, INC. P.O. Box 305 Cannon Falls, MN 55009	Phone: (507) 663-1091 Fax: (507) 663-1228 prairiecreek@prairieresto.com www.prairieresto.com/prairie_creek.shtml



4. **Within 150 Miles of project:**

PRAIRIE NURSERY, INC. P.O. Box 306 Westfield, WI 53964	Phone: (608) 296-3679 or (800) 476-9453 Fax: (608) 296-2741 webcs@prairienursery.com www.prairienursery.com
TAYLOR CREEK RESTORATION NURSERIES 17921 Smith Road, P.O. Box 256 Brodhead, WI 53520	Phone: (608) 897-8641 Fax: (608) 897-2044 tcn@appliedeco.com www.appliedeco.com/tcn



- ***This is only a list of seed sources that the Winona Co. SWCD is aware of. We try to keep this list up to date but there may be other seed sources that qualify that we are not aware of and are not on this list.***

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:



Daryl Buck Winona County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) P.O. Box 39, 400 Wilson St. Lewiston, MN 55952	Phone: (507) 523-2171 Ext. 112 Daryl.Buck@winonaswcd.com www.winonaswcd.org
Don Ramsden, DNR Wildlife and Winona/Root River Pheasants Forever 15035 Highway 74 Altura, MN 55910	Phone: (507) 932-4133 Ext. 224 Don.Ramsden@dnr.state.mn.us