



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Plant Enhancement Activity – ANM03-Incorporate Native Grasses and/or Legumes into 15% or more of the forage base



Enhancement Description:

Incorporate native grasses and/or legumes into 15% or more of the forage base using adapted species and varieties, appropriate seeding rates, and timing of seeding.

Land Use Applicability: This enhancement is applicable to pastureland.

Benefits

Enhancing existing pasture by incorporating native

grasses and legumes can:

1. Improve forage quality and quantity
2. Build soil fertility (legumes fix nitrogen in the soil), increase organic matter
3. Increase plant diversity and promote wildlife habitat
4. Provide forage during seasonal slump periods
5. Extend the grazing season
6. Food source for pollinating insects

Criteria for Incorporating Native Grasses and/or Legumes into 15% or more of the forage base

1. A written grazing management plan that outlines specific goals and objectives.
2. Utilize adapted species, seeding rates and seeding dates according to local NRCS practice standards.
3. Determine species composition before and after seeding. Species composition must be 15% or more of native grasses and/or legumes.
4. If legumes are incorporated, a current soil test is required. Lime and fertilizer application to facilitate establishment and persistence of legumes is required if a current soil test indicates.
5. Livestock stocking rates that will allow for proper forage utilization.

Documentation Requirements for Incorporating Native Grasses and/or Legumes into 15% or more of the forage base

- A written planting specifications plan identifying:
 - Plant species' to be seeded.
 - Seeding rates and dates.
 - Site preparations and planting method
 - Amounts of fertilizer and lime to be applied.
 - Map showing locations where seeding activity is applied.



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Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM03 – Incorporate Native Grasses and/or Legumes into 15% or More of the Forage Base

Additional guidance for incorporating native grasses and legumes into the forage base:

Appropriate native grasses and/or legumes will depend on site conditions and intended use. Potential native grasses for pasture include western wheatgrass, thickspike wheatgrass, basin wildrye, and big bluegrass. Native legumes available include basalt milkvetch and Utah or northern sweetvetch. A desirable native forb to include is western yarrow.

Refer to the following guidance for more information on selecting and establishing native grasses and legumes that fit your conditions and needs.

Idaho NRCS Plant Materials Technical Note 10, *Pasture and Range Seedings*. ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ID/programs/technotes/tn10_pasture.pdf

Idaho NRCS Plant Materials Technical Note 10, *Pasture – Species Selections and Grazing Management Guidelines*. ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ID/programs/technotes/tn11_pasture.pdf

Idaho NRCS Plant Materials Technical Note 24, *Grass, Grass-like, Forb, Legume and Woody Species for the Intermountain West*. ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ID/programs/technotes/tn24_seedspecies

Idaho NRCS Plant Material Technical Note 24 Supplement: *Intermountain Planting Guide*, USDA-ARS Forage and Range Research Lab/Utah State Extension, AG 510. <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ID/programs/technotes/tn24supplement>.

University of Idaho Bulletin 547, *Idaho Forage Handbook*. <http://info.ag.uidaho.edu/forage/index.html>.