Clover Food Plots – All You Ever Want to Know





Recently, Real World Head Seedsman, Duane Hopkins was asked to outline some facts about clover. Duane's experience as a seedsman and hunter will provide insight to those making decisions about their clover food plots. Duane says, "There is no replacement for getting it done right the first time!" If you make the right decision now, your Clover Plot can flourish for many years to come.

Frost Seed vs. Wait Until You Can Work the Ground

- If you have an existing plot of clover that has void areas
 = FROST SEED ASAP
- If you have a plot that had annuals in it last year with low percentage of weeds = FROST SEED ASAP
- If you have a plot that was overtaken by weeds last year
 WAIT TILL YOU CAN WORK THE GROUND, SPRAY,
 AND CULITPACK
- If you have a new area you want to establish in Clover that has never been worked or planted = WAIT TILL YOU CAN WORK THE GROUND, SPRAY, AND CULITPACK
- If you are in an area of the country where you do not think that you will get a couple good freeze and thaw cycles
 WAIT TILL YOU CAN WORK THE GROUND, SPRAY, AND CULITPACK



New Growth Coming Up from Frost Seeding

How do I know if it is too late to frost seed?

A rule of thumb to use is that on a warm day, if you walk through the plot and only have mud on the bottom of your boot, it is too late to frost seed. If you walk across the plot and have mud an inch up the sides, the ground will still receive the seed and you should frost seed. Basically, your wanting hard rain, snow, or freeze thaw to set the seed. If the water has already soaked into the ground, you need to wait and work the ground in the spring. If it is still soft enough to show mud up your boot – get that seed in ground ASAP!



Choose a High-Quality Seed:

We have talked about understanding seed tags for years. Here are things to look for!

– **Seed Germination Date**: Make sure the date of the test this year. Seed germination rates decline as time goes on. Germination tests from previous years will not reflect results now.

- Germination Percentage: Make sure you see that the germination percentage above 80%. Quality seed is vital to having a good stand of clover your first year.
- Other Crop Seed and Weed Seed Percentage These need to be very low! Some companies put extra fillers to pad their profits.
- Inert Matter Percentage: Inoculate and seed coating is important for seed, but you do not need a high percentage of seed coating to make the seed germinate.
 Furthermore, seed coating does not make bad seed good. High levels of seed coating are only used to make the seed look "pretty" or dilute the quality seed to pad profits.
 When you see poor germination, high weed seed, high seed coatings you are buying very little seed PERIOD!



Choose the Right Type of Clover

Make sure the clover you are buying is a PERENNIAL! Many companies trick you into buying blend containing Annuals. While you plot may look great year one, following years will struggle and require much more frost seeding and maintenance to be productive year after year.

Make sure the clover you are buying is a blend of specific clovers that have been tested through Tissue Analysis. Many companies will simply grab what left over Ag Seed is available and throw it into a blend. Look for companies that have tested specific

varieties of clovers to assure a land manager that deer are attracted to something all year long. Every type of plant goes through peaks and valleys of FEED VALUE and SOLUBLE PROTEIN according to tissue analysis. To ensure you are planting a blend that will attract deer to that plot year-round, find a company who has done tissue analysis on the specific varieties in their blend.

THERE IS NO REPLACEMENT FOR DOING IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME!