



360 Forage

soil health + plant health + animal health

BARLEY

Hordeum vulgare

Purpose & Fit

With higher fiber content than other grains, barley is a versatile forage crop with many uses. Barley straw (especially six-row barleys with the highest protein content) can be used as feed for ruminants, as a bedding material or excellent in the reclamation of saline soils.

Growth Pattern

Barley grows up to 4 ft. high with a strong fibrous root system. Seminal roots grow as deep as 7 ft. and provide anchoring while adventitious roots gather nutrients for the plant. Barley has more tillers than wheat, oats, or rye.

Climate & Soil

Although less winter-hardy than wheat, barley has the ability to tolerate higher and drier climates than other cereal grains including wheat and oats. Barley is best suited to well-drained, fertile loams, or light clay soils, and performance is better on alkaline soils than on acidic soils. Tolerant of saline soils (up to 1%), barley is also tolerant of heat, but the heat must be dry heat as humidity will create disease issues. Waterlogging is not tolerated by barley.

Planting

Plant earlier than the appropriate dates to plant wheat in your area to ensure good establishment and root development prior to winter dormancy. Follow at least a two-year rotation with crops other than small grains. Barley requires a firm seedbed.

Grazing

Barley provides more fall pasture than wheat or rye, and early planting means an earlier start to grazing. Remove cattle from pastures before the onset of jointing (when the first node and head emerge above ground level).

Quick Data

Seeds/LB:
13,000 - 15,000

Optimum Growth Range:
32°F+

Seeding Depth:
1.00" - 1.50" Depth

Min Time To Emergence:
8 days

Planting Rate (Monoculture):
120 Lb/A - 150 Lb/A

Tons of Dry Matter an Acre:
2.7

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