



Vital HAIRY VETCH

Vicia villosa

Purpose & Fit

A pioneer species that will remain green longer than common vetch, hairy vetch will proliferate quickly during spring months. Flowering and seeding occur late in the season, and it can be used as fodder, grazed, or cut for hay/silage. Unlike clovers, hairy vetch will not cause bloat. Able to withstand trampling, hairy vetch will provide spring grazing and have a feed value slightly lower than clover or alfalfa. Hairy vetch is the most winter-hardy of the commercial vetches.

Growth Pattern

Hairy vetch is an annual or biannual with a woolly appearance due to long soft hairs on the stems and leaves. A horizontal growth pattern occurs when first planted, but over time hairy vetch will grow between 12 – 28 inches in height.

Climate & Soil

Hairy vetch is winter hardy but will do better when grown with a companion crop or some coverage, including snow or cover crop residues. Preferred moisture conditions are between twelve and thirty-six inches of annual precipitation or irrigation.

Planting

Hairy vetch should be planted into moist soils to ensure proper inoculation. Sow in late summer in colder climates or mid-autumn in warm climates. Spring sowings will assist in providing biomass before the summer heat begins.

Grazing

Graze hairy vetch from the 10 – 15 node stage through flowering. Remove livestock once plants produce seed pods as the seeds can be poisonous to livestock. Hairy vetch will not withstand heavy grazing.

Quick Data

Seeds/LB:
28,000

Optimum Growth Range:
46°F - 77°F

Seeding Depth:
0.25" - 0.50" Depth

Min Time To Emergence:
14 days

Planting Rate (Monoculture):
25 Lb/A - 40 Lb/A

Tons of Dry Matter an Acre:
1.5 - 3.5