

# Forage Factsheet – Creeping Red Fescue

Species Name: Creeping Red Fescue – *Festuca rubra*

Origin: Europe, Czechoslovakia, North America.

Longevity: Long-lived.

Uses: Turf grass, pasture, reclamation, stockpiling.

Optimal time of use: Creeping red fescue is adapted to early spring or fall grazing. Mature stands form thick sod resilient to traffic.

Recovery after use: Variable, depending on available moisture and temperature.

Yield: Creeping red fescue produces approximately 4739 lbs/acre (5385 kg/ha) in the Black soil zone and 6960 lbs/acre (7909 kg/ha) of dry matter under irrigation.

Palatability/Nutritional Value: Creeping red fescue is palatable in the spring and fall. Creeping red fescue has an average total digestible nutrients of 61% and crude protein of 12% in the vegetative state. Stockpiled creeping red fescue has adequate nutrition for a dry pregnant cow.

Competitiveness: Creeping red fescue is competitive in moist areas.

Winter Hardiness: Creeping red fescue has good winter hardiness when adequate snow cover is present.

Drought Tolerance: Creeping red fescue has limited drought tolerance.

Erosion Control: Creeping red fescue is very good at controlling erosion. It is often used for revegetation of waterways and canals because it forms a thick, soil binding sod, but does not impede water movement.

Ease of Establishment: Creeping red fescue has fair establishment vigor.

Suggested Mixtures: Legumes such as alfalfa and cicer milkvetch.

Salinity Tolerance: Creeping red fescue has moderate salinity tolerance.

Flooding Tolerance: Creeping red fescue tolerates approximately one to two weeks of spring flooding or waterlogged soils.

Soil Texture: Creeping red fescue is suited to moist sandy, loamy, and clay soils in the Black and Grey soil zones.

Acidity Tolerance: Creeping red fescue tolerates soil pH as low as 5.0.

Management Considerations: Use appropriate stocking rates. Allow adequate rest following grazing. Creeping red fescue can increase in abundance when seeded with other species in a pasture mix.