

# ROCKY MOUNTAIN FESCUE

*Festuca saximontana*



## ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION

Native, long-lived, cool season bunchgrass indigenous to the Northern Hemisphere. Dwarf small-tufted bunchgrass, very similar to hard fescue, and more common at higher, subalpine and alpine elevations in Rocky Mountains.

## GROWTH HABITS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

Adapted to open, exposed high altitude sites in Rocky Mountain and northern Intermountain sites with over 8 to 10" ppt. Thrives on fertile, silty and clayey soils. Tolerant of shallow, exposed sites. Cold and drought-tolerant. Grows in well-drained meadows, sub-humid grassland sites. Not tolerant of flooding, high water tables, or inundation for any extended period.

## CULTURE

Culture similar to hard fescue. Plant seed 1/4 – 1/2" deep on coarse textured soils and 1/4" or shallower on fine-textured soils. Better stands obtained on firm seedbed. Drill seed at 1.5 to 3.0 lbs. PLS per acre for dryland. Use increased seeding rates for turf grass. Increase rate 50–100% for harsh sites, (south, west) or steep exposures, poorer seedbeds, and when broadcasting. Seedling vigor is fair. Stands do not develop until the second or third year. Mulch on steep slopes and highly erosive sites. Seed early spring at lower altitudes with reliable moisture, late fall with uncertain moisture and at lower mountain elevations, or in spring or very early summer at higher mountain elevations. Control weeds with mowing or herbicides.

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Used on rangeland, mine lands and as a durable turf grass on sandy soils and for erosion control in northern states. Succeeds better than most grasses on sandy, gravelly soils. Graze early in the spring, however not widely used for forage.

## IMPROVED VARIETIES

None listed for Region.

PawneeButtesSeed Inc.

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