

Wildflowers and Prairies

Prairie seeds will often germinate over a period of two to three years. Some will appear the first year, while others will come up in the second and even third year after the initial planting. Most perennial prairie flowers and grasses will not flower until their third or fourth full growing season. **Patience is required when establishing a prairie.**



Perennial prairie plants devote most of their efforts in the first few years to developing their famous root systems. They will not be readily apparent in the first year, with little visible above-ground growth. However, they are steadily building their “root bank accounts” to sustain them in future years. The deep roots of the prairie flowers and grasses give them long-term staying power that allows them to squeeze out annual and biennial weeds and return yearly for decades.

Year One

First year weed control is required to reduce the competition between weeds and prairie seedlings for water, light, and space. Seeded areas should be mowed approximately three times during the first growing season to a height of four to six inches when the majority of weeds are in flower or when weeds reach a height of 10 to 12 inches.

As a general rule of thumb, anything taller than 10 inches or in flower is a weed. Mowing this high will cut off the taller weeds while missing the shorter prairie perennials. Mow before the weeds set seed to prevent further soil contamination. Do not pull weeds in a first year seeded area as this will disturb the developing seedlings and un-germinated seed. In the fall of the first growing season, maintain the vegetation at eight to ten inches through the winter to insulate the developing prairie seedlings and to help prevent frost heaving.



Year Two

During the spring of the second year, mow the standing residual vegetation to the ground in early spring and rake off the cuttings.

Year Three and Beyond

Mow your Prairie to the ground in the late fall, late September-November.



No Mow Lawn

No Mow lawn is a blend of creeping fescues that interlock with bunch-forming fescues to form a dense sod that withstands moderate foot traffic and inhibits weed growth. The deep roots of the No Mow grasses (up to 9" deep) enhance drought resistance by reducing water loss and reaching deeper water reserves.

The cool-season fescues grow during spring and fall, when the temperatures are cooler. Because of this cool-season growth, mowing twice a year is a popular approach – once in late spring when the seed heads appear, and then again in fall. The minimum height for mowing is 3.5 – 4 inches. Left un-mowed, the fine fescues in No Mow lay down and form a soft, attractive mat of deep green grass. Once established, No Mow is a slow growing, low maintenance lawn for large or small landscapes.

NO MOW LAWNS...

- Establishes Quickly
- Forms a thick flowing carpet of grass
- Reduces mowing to once or twice a year
- Requires little if any watering, once established
- Inhibits weed invasion with its dense root system
- Requires no fertilizers or chemical treatment
- Withstands moderate foot traffic
- Thrives in full sun or partial shade in any well-drained soil

