

Crops for
Wildlife Plantings
Recommendations, Establishment & Management

Planting cereal grains benefits wildlife attracted to the planted area and those viewing or harvesting the wildlife. When planting food plots, you must take care to avoid having a legitimate and legal practice from becoming an illegal baiting activity.

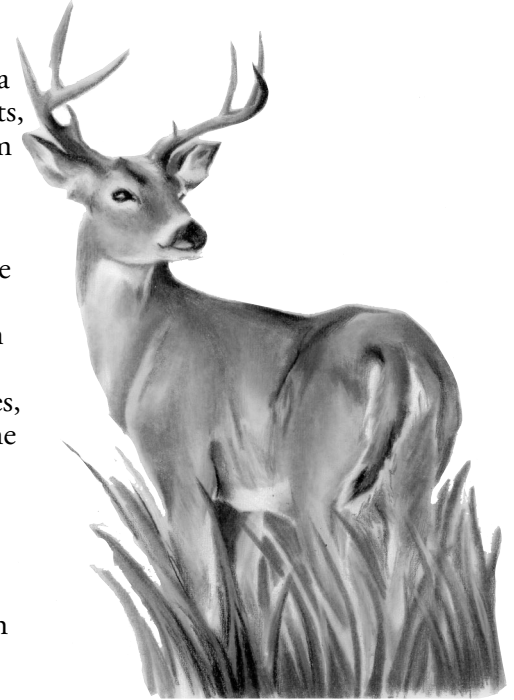
The purpose of this publication is to document what crop and wildlife management personnel from the LSU AgCenter's Cooperative Extension Service deem as accepted and approved planting, management and harvest procedures for a variety of species planted in Louisiana for wildlife management purposes. In all cases, the greatest possible window of opportunity has been provided as to planting dates, planting practices and other management activities as they relate to the overall management of the plant species listed.

Wildlife management plantings are often successful without the high grain yields associated with many commercial grain operations. Therefore planting dates for wildlife food plots in some cases may be outside dates in which crop establishment is intended to produce high grain yields. When done in a legitimate manner, crops may be grown entirely to attract wildlife, and those engaged in these activities need not be classified as "farmers." Fertilization rates for all species listed should be according to soil test results. Many species that are planted in summer can serve as an attractant for doves when plantings mature and seed. Be careful when establishing fall plantings for white-tailed deer and turkey. In these areas, seed must be adequately covered to prevent it from attracting migratory birds to the area where hunting will occur.

Manipulation of standing crops to improve their attractiveness to doves is allowed to a great extent, but these same crops must be left undisturbed where waterfowl will be hunted. Time and distance are two factors to consider when baited areas are associated with bird usage. Any area in which the bait has been removed is considered baited for a 10-day period following removal of the bait source.

There is no set distance from a "baited" source from which a person is considered legal in hunting any migratory bird. Baited areas can influence the movement and concentration of migratory birds over other areas. Where "influence" can be determined, the area is considered baited and off limits to hunting.

Information on specific baiting issues can be obtained by accessing the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's home page at www.fws.gov or by contacting enforcement personnel at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.



Warm Season Plantings

| Species | Seedbed Preparation | Seeding Rate | Planting Dates | Maturation Period |
|----------------------|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Chufa | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.5 – 6.5 | Drill: 30 lbs. Broadcast: 50 lbs. | April 1 - June 30 | 90 - 110 days |
| Corn | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 6.5 - 7.0 | Drill: 12 lbs. Broadcast: 12-15 lbs. | Commercial Hybrid: March 1 - April 30 Tropical Hybrid: May 1 - June 30 | 60 - 120 days |
| Egyptian Wheat | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.5-6.5 | Drill: 8 lbs. Broadcast: 12-15 lbs. | April 1 - June 30 | 90 - 120 days |
| Grain Sorghum (Milo) | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.5-6.5 | Drill: 8 lbs. Broadcast: 12-15 lbs. | April 15 - June 15 | 90 - 120 days |
| Browntop Millet | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.5-7.0 | Drill: 10 lbs. Broadcast: 20 lbs. | April 1 - August 15 | 60 days |
| Japanese Millet | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; also may be broadcast on moist mudflats; optimal pH: 6.0 | Drill: 10 lbs. Broadcast: 20 lbs. | April 1 - August 15 | 90 days |
| Dove Proso Millet | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 6.0 | Drill: 10 lbs. Broadcast: 20 lbs. | April 1 - June 30 | 75 - 100 days |
| Sunflower | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.5-6.5 | Drill: 5 lbs. Broadcast: 7 lbs. | April 1 - June 30 | 90 - 100 days |
| Soybeans | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.8-7.0 | Drill: 30 lbs. Broadcast: 50 lbs. | April 1 - August 15 | |
| Cowpeas | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.8-7.0 | Drill: 15 lbs. Broadcast: 25 lbs. | April 1 - August 15 | |

| Species | Seedbed Preparation | Seeding Rate | Planting Dates | Maturation Period |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Partridge Pea | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.8-7.0 | Drill: 5 lbs. Broadcast: 10 lbs. | March 1 - May 31 | Flowers: July-September Matures: Sept.-October |
| Bush Lespedezas (Bicolor and Thunberg) | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.8-7.0 | Drill: 8 lbs. Broadcast: 10 lbs. Seedlings: 30" x 18" spacing | Seed: March 15-May 31; Seedlings: Winter | Flowers: late summer Matures: Sept.-October |
| Kobe Lespedeza | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.8-7.0 | Drill: 3 lbs. Broadcast: 8 lbs. | March 15 - June 30 | Flowers: Aug.-September Matures: Sept.-October |
| Rice for Seed Production | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; also may be broadcast on moist/shallowly flooded fields; optimal pH: <5.8 | Water-seeding or dry broadcast: 90-110 lbs. Drill: 90-100 lbs. | March 15 - June 30 | 60 - 100 days depending on variety |
| Rice for Crawfish Forage | Disk seedbed; broadcast or drill seed and cover to 1" maximum depth. Flush field to stimulate growth, but do not hold water on field until stand is established. If field is to be hunted in addition to use for crawfish production, manipulation in any way to provide openings for crawfish harvest must be made before viable seed production. | 100 - 150 lbs. per acre | July 15 - September 1 | |



Cool Season Plantings

| Species | Seedbed Preparation | Seeding Rate | Planting Dates | Maturation Period |
|----------------|--|--|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Wheat | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.5-6.5 | Drill: 60 lbs. Broadcast: 80 lbs. | September 1 - November 1 | |
| Oats | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.5-6.5 | Drill: 60 lbs. Broadcast: 80 lbs. | September 1 - November 1 | |
| Ryegrass | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 6.0 | Drill: 20 lbs. Broadcast: 30 lbs. | September 1 - November 1 | |
| Elbon Rye | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 5.6-6.5 | Drill: 60 lbs. Broadcast: 80 lbs. | September 1 - November 15 | |
| Winter Clovers | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1/2" maximum depth; optimal pH: 7.0 | Drill: 6 lbs. (Crimson: 15 lbs.) Broadcast: 8 lbs. (Crimson: 20 lbs.) | September 1 - November 15 | |
| Winter Peas | Disk; plant; cover seed to 1" maximum depth; optimal pH: 6.0-7.0 | Drill: 40 lbs. Broadcast: 60 lbs. | September 1 - November 1 | |

^a Pounds per acre unless otherwise specified and represent the maximum recommended. Depending on plant management and wildlife species, lower planting rates are frequently used, especially for quail and turkey.

^b Production, particularly of large-seeded plants such as chufa and corn may be reduced slightly by late planting dates.

^c Maturation period generally shortens later in the planting season, and plant height is often reduced.

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