

# Fuego

## TALL FESCUE

**F**uego Tall Fescue is a unique, dense tillering type of tall fescue. Its softer, narrower semi-prostrate leaves contain a higher percentage of digestible dry matter with less lignin than other tall fescues. This makes Fuego more palatable to cattle and therefore, can improve live weight gains.

Once established, Fuego can out compete weeds and is resistant to many foliar diseases. It is tolerant of heat, drought, low fertility, poor drainage and wide ranges in soil pH. Fuego will provide extra feed over dry summer periods making it a perfect choice for non-irrigated pastures. Under irrigation and high fertility, Fuego is also a top producer. High dry matter yields can be expected. Fuego contains no endophyte, and therefore no toxic alkaloids.

Fuego is suited for frequent grazing, and for use as silage and hay as well. It can be stockpiled for winter grazing.

### History

Tall fescues have a deep root system, which causes them to be tolerant of heat and drought. Tall fescues will grow in the dry summer periods making it a perfect choice for non-irrigated pasture. Although tall fescues are slow in the beginning, once established they regrow quickly and provide high quality feed as long as the plants are not allowed to form seed heads. Then the plants become stemmy and lose their palatability.

### Management Tips

Fuego produces durable, persistent pastures that can withstand abuse once it is established. To achieve this, careful stand management during the first year establishment is essential for long-term productivity.

Fuego is a perennial bunch grass. Once the newly seeded plants are firmly rooted, they should be lightly grazed or mowed several times before intensive usage to promote tillering. After the initial shoot is grazed or clipped off, the plant sends up multiple new shoots, or tillers, from the basal buds at the base of the plant. Likewise, as these new tillers are clipped, more tillers are formed creating a dense leafy stand. The tillering process is triggered by the basal buds receiving periodic exposure to sunlight. To maximize tiller growth during the first year, the height of the pasture should be maintained at 3 to 10 inches to allow maximum sunlight penetration. Under good growing conditions this will take 6 to 7 weeks after a spring sowing or 10 to 12 weeks for a fall sowing. Defer making hay until late in the season of the first year.

Once established, Fuego should be grazed at 6 to 8 inches, leaving a 3-inch stubble, or machine harvest for hay or silage in the pre-boot stage. It is important to graze or mow the stand at regular intervals to keep it leafy and vegetative.

### Features

- ▶ Increased Dry Matter yield
- ▶ Suited for frequent grazing
- ▶ Bunch type grass
- ▶ Stockpiled for winter grazing
- ▶ Tolerant of heat, drought, low fertility, poor drainage

### Benefits

- ▶ Increased production
- ▶ Increased milk/meat yields
- ▶ Good companion for legumes and perennial ryegrass
- ▶ More potential feed during winter period
- ▶ More potential feed during adverse conditions

### Seeding Rate

- ▶ Fuego, like all tall fescues, is slow to establish, taking a year or more to reach its full production potential. Fuego is best planted in early Autumn or in the Spring when the soil is warm. In areas with very cold winters, a Spring planting is best
- ▶ If used as a single grass component, 25 to 30 lbs per acre
- ▶ Planted with 2-3 lbs per acre of legume: 20 lbs per acre
- ▶ Use Fuego in a grass mixture with perennial ryegrass at 20 lbs per acre together with 5 lbs of ryegrass

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# SEED RESEARCH FORAGE DATA SHEET

## Establishment

Plant Fuego in a prepared firm seedbed, seeding with a Brillion-type seeder, or by broadcast and cultipack. Don't plant too deep, 1/8 - 1/4" is best. Fuego, like all tall fescues, do not establish well under no-till/interseeding, unless an herbicide is used to kill or retard the existing stand, as there is too much competition from the already established grasses.

Soil samples should be collected and analyzed well in advance of establishment. Lime should be applied to achieve a soil pH of at least 5.8. Ideally, lime should be applied six months in advance to allow time to react. Phosphorous and potassium should be applied according to soil test recommendation. Lacking a soil test, apply: N=30 lbs, P=70 lbs and K=50 lbs/acre.

<b>Agassiz, B.C.</b>	
88/89 Forage Yields (Kg/ha)	
<b>Fuego</b>	<b>11,623</b>
Hudson	11,041
Maximize	11,224
Festorina	10,895
ALTA	11,260
Barcel	10,257
Courtenay	9,511
Johnstone	9,089

*Source: ARDSA South Coastal Variety Trials*

<b>Duncan, B.C.</b>	
88/89 Forage Yields (Kg/ha)	
Hudson	14,712
Maximize	13,905
<b>Fuego</b>	<b>14,178</b>
Festorina	14,516
ALTA	13788
Barcel	14,024
Courtenay	13,249
Grasslands Roa	13,236
Safe	13,327
Martin	12,964
Stellar	13,632
Johnstone	13,468