



## Birdsfoot Trefoil

Nancy Ehlke and Donn Vellekson



Birdsfoot trefoil is an excellent non-bloating pasture legume that can also be harvested for hay and silage. It grows under a wide range of soil conditions, and persists longer and performs better than other legumes under poor soil conditions such as low fertility, acidity and poor drainage. It is also persistent when grown with Kentucky bluegrass, reed canarygrass and timothy.

Performance trials of birdsfoot trefoil were established at Rosemount in 1997, 1998, 2001 and 2003, and at

**Please note:** No trials of bromegrass, cicer milkvetch, reed canarygrass, tall fescue or timothy were conducted in 2007. The most recent information on these crops is available on the web at [www.maes.umn.edu](http://www.maes.umn.edu) At this site click on Commodity/Crop Links, then on Varietal Trials, which will display a crops listing.

Grand Rapids in 1998, 2001 and 2006. The trials are generally harvested twice at Grand Rapids and two or three times at Rosemount.

Winterhardiness is very important and only adapted varieties should be planted. The variety Norcen was released jointly in 1983 by the agriculture experiment stations of Minnesota and six other north central states; it has been a standard ever since. It is winterhardy and has performed well in grazing trials.

Consult forage management specialists for other varieties that may be appropriate for your area.

### Dry matter yield, in tons dry matter per acre, of birdsfoot trefoil varieties seeded at 2 locations.

Variety	Winter Injury,* 5/24/2004	Rosemount				Grand Rapids		
		1998	1999-01	2002	2004-06	1999-01	2002-04	2007
Bright	—	3.6	3.1	—	—	—	—	—
Dawn	1	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.4	4.8	2.1	1.7
Empire	—	4.0	—	—	—	4.4	—	1.6
Fergus	—	3.9	—	—	—	—	—	—
Georgia 1	—	—	3.6	—	—	4.6	1.8	—
Leo	—	3.9	3.1	—	—	—	—	—
Norcen	1	4.3	3.5	3.9	3.9	4.8	2.1	1.5
Nueltin	1	3.7	3.1	4.0	3.4	4.2	2.2	—
Pardee	8.3	—	—	3.5	0.1	—	1.9	1.6
Roseau	2.5	4.1	3.4	4.1	3.5	4.6	2.1	—
Steadfast	—	3.1	2.7	—	—	3.5	—	—
Trevig	—	4.1	—	4.2	—	—	—	—
Viking	1.8	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.1	4.4	2.1	—
Witt	—	4	3.2	4.1	—	—	2.0	2.0
<b>LSD@5%</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>

\* Winter injury at Rosemount; 1 = no injury; 9 = dead.

### Seed sources for alternate forage plots.

Deer Creek Seed	PO Box 105, Ashland, WI 54806	877-247-3736
Pickseed	Box 304, 1 Greenfield Rd., Lindsay, ON Canada K9V 4S3	800-268-2806
Norfarm Seed	RR 2, Box 37, Roseau, MN 56751	218-463-2119
Etheridge Farm	1950 Lane 11, Powell, WY 82435	307-754-2371
Allied Seed	9311 Highway 45 Lane, Nampa, ID 83686	888-252-7573
Brett Young LTD	PO Box 99, St. Norbert PS, Winnipeg, MB Canada R3V 1L5	800-665-5015
Wrightson LTD	PO Box 50240, Porirua, New Zealand	64 4 49183335
Agri Pro	PO Box 30, Berthoud, CO 80513	877-943-2827
Cascade Seed	1406 E. Front Ave., Spokane, WA 99220	509-534-9431
Twin City Seed	7265 Washington Ave. S., Edina, MN 55439	952-944-7105
General Feed and Grain	7128 3rd St., Bonners Ferry, ID 83805	208-267-3185
Geertson Seed	1665 Burroughs Rd., Adrian OR 97901	800-843-0390
Lethridge Research Centre	PO Box 3000, Lethbridge, AB Canada T1J 4B1	403-327-4561
Northern Excellence	PO. Box 186, Williams, MN 56686	218-783-2214

### Birdsfoot Trefoil Planting Rate and Date

Bushel Weight, Pounds.....60

Seeds/Pound..... 372,000

Planting Rate, Pounds/Acre

Alone..... 8

In Mixtures..... 6

Planting Rate, Seeds/Sq.Ft.

Alone..... 70

In Mixtures..... 50

Planting Date... Early Spring or Summer