



**LORENZ'S OK
SEEDS, LLC**

PO Box 835 Okeene
Oklahoma 73763
Phone: 1 800 826 3655
Fax: (580) 822 3630

<http://www.lorenzsokseedsllc.com>

Email: okseeds@okeene.com

PLANT FACT SHEET

Big Bluestem *Andropogon gerardii* Fact Sheet



Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) is a native, perennial, warm season grass and is climatically adapted throughout the Midwest and Northeast. Big Bluestem is a tufted grass that forms sod, and has short, scaly rhizomes. Big bluestem is tall, reaching a height of 6 to 8 feet on most areas where it is protected from grazing. It is very leafy at the base, with some leaves carried up on the stem. The seed heads normally have 3 spikelets that look like a 'turkey foot.'

In areas prone to erosion Big bluestem can be planted in areas moderate to excessively well-drained soils. Best results are achieved when it is mixed with other warm season grasses.

Livestock find Big bluestem a palatable warm season grass and prefer it over switchgrass. Big bluestem should be planted by itself for best management. This is especially the case in areas where continuous and/or extensive grazing occurs. If intentional rotational grazing practices are employed it can be mixed with other species.

Big bluestem provides a nesting and escape cover for birds and mammals during the summer and winter months.

Seeding should begin early in the spring and conventional tilling should be used wherever possible. If no-till has to be used spring planting should be facilitated by early fall sod control. De-bearded seed must be used if drills without a chaffy seed box are employed. If broadcasting a packer should be used to firm the seedbed and incorporate the seed $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ " similar to alfalfa. The seeding rate for broadcast and no-till methods should be 7-12 pounds PLS per acre.

When compared to weed and cool season grasses Big bluestem has relatively weak seed vigor. As such it's necessary to control competing plants to ensure the successful establishment of stands. High mowing above the bluestem seedlings is an often used weed control method. Another method if conditions are dry enough is to graze competitive grasses after frost in the fall and prior to the bluestem reaching 1' in height in the spring.

Do not harvest bluestem during the establishment season. On good stands harvesting by haying or controlled grazing is possible. The initial harvest should not begin until the bluestem is 20" tall. It can then be grazed for up to 5 days or cut to no less than 8" high and then protected from further use until it reaches 20" in height again. Cropping should not occur below 8" or within 1 month of expected frost. Following a killing frost, the bluestem may be grazed to 8" high again. However, this reduces forage quality and supplementation is recommended for growing animals.

Seed Available in the Following Quantities

| Packet | Ounce | Pound | 50# Bag | Wholesale | Retail | Dropship |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| \$2.00 + SH | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Call Freddie Lorenz for a quote — Toll free 1 800 826 3655