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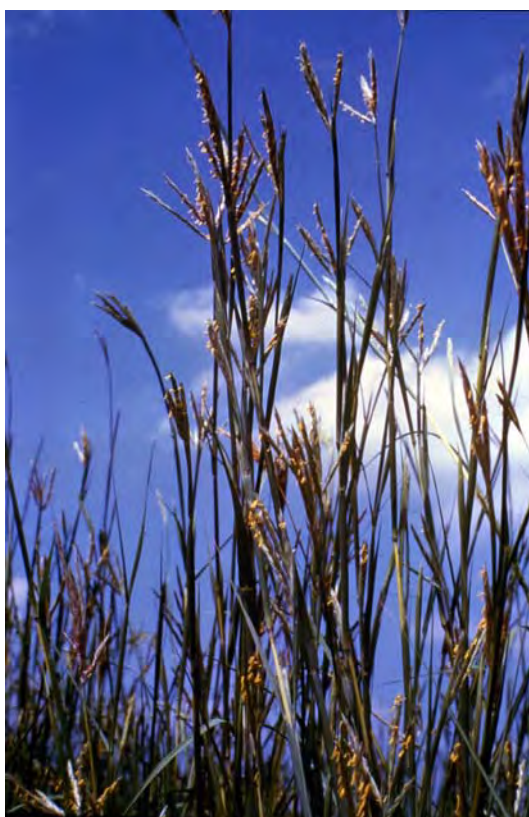
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## PLANT FACT SHEET

### **Sand Bluestem (*Andropogon hallii*) Fact Sheet**



Sand Bluestem (*Andropogon hallii*) is a native, warm season, bunchgrass. It is climatically adapted throughout the Great Plains region, occurring primarily west of the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from Canada to Mexico. Sand bluestem favors sandy, loamy sand and sandy loam soils and is an important element in many native hay fields.

Sand bluestem is tufted, forms sod and has well developed rhizomes with lengths between 4 and

8 inches. Reaching a height of 7 feet in ideal conditions Sand bluestem has a "J" shaped base with solid culms that are grooved on one side. The leaf blades have prominent midribs and may have a few hairs. The majority of leaves are found near the base although some do carry up the stem. Sand bluestem seed heads generally have between 2 to 6 digitate racemes giving it a "turkey foot" appearance.

Because of its growth habits Sand bluestem is often used in conservation practices by the NCRS including for example; animal trails and walkways, vegetative barriers, pasture and hay planting, wind barriers and land reconstruction etc.

Sand bluestem is also often used for erosion control plantings on sites that are sand, loamy sand or sandy loam. Usually it is planted as part of a mixture with other warm season grasses.

Sand bluestem makes a good to excellent forage as it is highly palatable, and high in crude protein just prior to seed head formation and also provides a high yield. Once the seed heads have formed both the nutritive and palatability values decrease appreciably. Under continuous heavy grazing Sand bluestem will eventually die out and be replaced by less desirable plants.

Sand bluestem also provides a good to excellent forage for any browsing wildlife species. Upland birds eat the seeds while its clumpy growth pattern and upright structure throughout the winter provide an excellent nesting habitat for these birds and smaller mammal species.

Due to the increase in dry or xeric landscaping practices Sand bluestem is fast becoming a popular yard plant and in particular as a border for lawns and flowerbeds.

Plant Sand bluestem in the spring just before the start of the growing season using a specifically built native grass drill. It is best seeded into a

weed freestanding cover crop. The seeding rate is around 6 pounds PLS per acre.

Broadcasting will definitely result in a significantly lower number of viable seedlings will result when compared to drilling. Broadcasting should only be undertaken in areas where drilling is physically impossible.

Sand bluestem should not be harvested during the establishment season and in the second season harvesting by haying or pasturing should only occur on good stands. The plant should be at least 20 inches tall before the first harvest commences. It should only be grazed for a maximum of 5 days or cut no lower than 8 inches. It should then be protected until the minimum height of 20 inches is reached again. No cropping should occur below 8 inches or inside 1 month of anticipated frosts. Following a killing frost Sand bluestem may be grazed to 8 inches however, forage quality is greatly

reduced and supplementation is highly recommended for growing animals.

As Sand bluestem has relatively weak seedling vigor compared to weeds and cool season grasses, control of competition is essential if a successful stand is to be established. High mowing above the seedlings may be undertaken once the weeds reach 6 to 8 inches in height. Herbicide applications for weed control can be considered when weeds comprise more than 50% of the canopy.

Prescribed burns can also assist in removing weed mulch from seedlings and also warm the ground in the early spring. Grazing of competing cool season grasses after frost in the fall and before the Sand bluestem is 1 inch high is desirable unless the soil is too wet.

**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