

Ohio Prairie Nursery
Helping preserve Ohio native plants
One seed at a time



Planting instructions for your Native Seed Mix or Packet

- Your native plants are mostly long-lived perennials that send roots down the first year with little top growth. The second year will show top growth and some flowers. The plants continue to develop in size as they mature. It is important to remember that prairie plants take time to grow. Be patient. Your patience will be rewarded with a beautiful low maintenance garden that you will enjoy for years.
- Plant your seeds in a well-prepared, weed-free site.
- Divide the seed into two equal parts. You may want to mix each half with sand, aged sawdust or vermiculite as a carrier and marker to know where you have sown. Sow in one direction with $\frac{1}{2}$ of the mixture, then at 90 degrees with the other half. This will assure good coverage over the entire area. Lightly rake the area with a leaf rake turned upside down. The objective is to get seeds between $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ inches into the soil. Lastly, use the roller and roll one way and then at 90 degrees to the first rolling to set the seed. If your site is sloped and erosion may occur, cover the site lightly with clean weed-free straw or fine mulch and water thoroughly. After the seeds sprout, do not let them dry out. For the first season, water thoroughly, approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of water, once per week if rain has not occurred.
- Keep the site mowed for the entire first season **if** annual weed pressure is high. We recommend using a mulching mower set as high as you can get it. Always mow when the area is dry and never remove more than 25% of the blade height at a time. Excessive grass clippings can smother seedlings and young plants. Mowing will not hurt your native seedlings but will help control the establishment of annual weeds. If perennial weeds are present, they will need to be eliminated. Remember that every time you pull a weed, you disturb the soil and bring up new seeds. Repeated cutting of perennial weeds to ground level may be the best option and will eventually kill them.
- You may need to mow a couple times early in the second season, and then let the area grow. Continue to remove perennial weeds as necessary. We recommend leaving the plants standing throughout the winter to provide habitat for wildlife and then mowing the area in the spring with a mulching mower.

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- **Frost Seeding** - *Requires exposed soil.* Frost seeding is a method of seeding that takes advantage of the natural freezing and thawing of the soil surface. Timing is important to assure that the soil surface is frozen when the seed is sown. You may broadcast over a light snow. Broadcast the seed as discussed in the planting instructions but do not roll it. As the soil freezes and thaws throughout the winter, the seed will stratify and get worked into the soil, thus completing the process.