

Annual White Sweetclover

White Sweetclover blooms and sets seed in its planting year. It is valued largely in its soil health benefits (including nitrogen fixation) and its ability to attract pollinators with its abundant nectar production.

Planting:

White Sweetclover can be frost-seeded in late winter or spring seeded as a summer annual. Spring seeding should be done in early spring, about oat-planting time, because sweet clover seed requires a good supply of moisture and cool temperatures for germination. Later plantings are less successful with limited moisture.

For successful overwintering, plant no later than late summer or 5-6 weeks before the first killing frost. Sweetclover grows very slowly for the first 60 days, and a timely planting is critical for overwintering for early spring blooms.

Use sweet clover type inoculant.

Soil Health Benefits:

- Tap roots can help alleviate clay hard-pans, open up heavy soils and sequester carbon at deeper soil levels. These deep roots can help bring up nutrients.
- Root exudates have the ability to make insoluble forms of potassium and phosphorus available for the plant and following rotation.
- Help recycle nutrients
- Tall, erect, stemmy growth, not considered good forage, but excellent biomass production to improve soil organic matter

Pollinator benefits:

- Attracts honeybees, and other beneficials, such as tachinid flies and other large predatory wasps.
- Produces nectar from morning until late afternoon
- Once it begins flowering, it will flower for about 2 months, because of the sheer number of flowers and irregularity of bloom.

At A Glance:

- ◇ Excellent summer nectar source
- ◇ Draws high volume of bees and other beneficial insects
- ◇ Flowering period of about 2 months. Can be extended with staggered plantings.
- ◇ Extensive soil health and fertility benefits
- ◇ Heat tolerant annual crop

Best Use—Cover Crop, Bee forage/Farmscaping

Establishment—Plant after soils are 50 degrees and rising

Seeding rate:

Drilled: 12-15 lbs/acre

1/4-1-2 inch depth

Broadcast: 20-25 lbs/acre

Frost Seeded: 20-25lbs/acre



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