

Barsica

Rape

Barsica rape (*Brassica napus*) is a fast maturing single or multi-graze forage crop that can be sown for summer, autumn or winter feed. It has higher protein and dry matter content than turnips. It can be sown from early spring to late summer depending on its use. It can be sown in combination with other forages. For summer feed, it can be planted with millet, other summer annuals or seeded as a pure stand. For winter feed, it can be planted with annual or Italian ryegrasses. Barsica is a true biennial and flowers the year following seeding, keeping it in a vegetative state longer for best forage quality.

Summer Feed Crop

As a summer feed crop, Barsica is sown in March-May, to graze around 70-110 days after sowing. It provides quality summer and autumn feed in dry areas, to maintain animal growth when pasture yield is typically poor.

Winter Feed Crop

For winter feed, Barsica can be sown from May-August, depending on feed requirements. It is typically ready to graze 80-120 days after sowing. An autumn grazing is possible from early sowings, and Barsica will overwinter if planted well ahead of the first frost.

Establishment

Barsica prefers good soil drainage and a soil pH between 5.3 and 7.5. Seed should be planted in a firm, moist, seedbed. Barsica can be broadcasted or drilled with 6 to 8 inch rows like white clover it is very important not to plant the seed too deep; one eighth of an inch will work best. Planting brassicas in the same field for more than 2 consecutive years is not recommended due to possible plant disease and pest problems.

Management

Pure stands of Barsica must be mature before grazing, but feed value is high. Plants develop a reddish tinge color when ready for harvest. Leaving a 10-inch stubble height is recommended to allow rapid regrowth. Feeding other forages with pure stands is recommended as is introducing livestock slowly to the crop.

Caution: Like many other crops Barsica if not terminated can self seed and become a weed issue in the following crops.



At A Glance:

- ◇ Excellent multiple graze forage with high tonnage
- ◇ Extends grazing season
- ◇ Can overwinter, unlike many brassicas
- ◇ Good in combination with cool season annual or summer annual grasses
- ◇ Excellent feed values, highly palatable and nutritious
- ◇ Great source of protein and energy
- ◇ Anti-parasitic properties, enhancing animal health

Best Uses:

Grazing, Wildlife Food Plots

Establishment:

Planting Dates: Early Spring through summer, if spring planted in a cold climate, best planted with an oats nurse crop for brassica seedling protection.

Seeding Rate: 3-5 lbs/Acre, 1-2lbs/in a mixture

Seeding Depth: 1/8" - Can also broadcast followed by cultipacking if not planted in a mix with larger seeds.



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Forage Tech Sheet