

# Brutus Summer Active Tall Fescue

*Festuca arundinacea*



<b>Seeding Rate</b>	<b>kg/ha</b>
Dryland	15 - 20
High Rainfall/Irrigation	30

<b>Seed Treatment</b>	None/XLR8™ optional
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## Description

A tall fescue with the unique combination of high feed quality, easy management and proven persistence

## Market Segment/Target

Dairy, beef and sheep. Long-term feed production. Temperate, high rainfall zones.

## Features

Excellent persistence  
Fast regrowth in all seasons  
Very late heading date

## Benefits

High feed quality and ease of management  
Strong persistence  
High total production  
Heading date very late

## Range

Low Bloat™	N
Super N Fixer™	N
XtraLeaf®	N

## SEED AGRONOMY TABLE

Maturity	Late
Hard Seed Level (description)	N
Waterlogging Tolerance	N

## DESCRIPTION

Brutus is a high yielding forage fescue with low endophyte levels. It is one of the latest generations of forage fescues selected for its palatability, cold tolerance, and drought tolerance. Brutus tall fescue was developed using phenotypic recurrent selection for stem rust resistance and vigour. Soft leafed, low endophyte, and tolerant of continuous stocking, Brutus tall fescue can be grown for pasture, hay, and silage. Benefits to operations include long grazing seasons, persistence with strong yields. Brutus tall fescue will also reduce soil erosion and recycle nutrients from both manure and biosolids. With the inclusion of good soil fertility and irrigation during the summer months, Brutus will perform exceptionally well.

## ESTABLISHMENT GUARANTEE®

At S&W Seed Company Australia we're so confident about our seed genetics and seed quality, we will replace seed at half the original purchase price if it fails to establish satisfactorily in the first thirty days\*

## STRENGTHS

Deep rooted perennial  
Adapted to a wide range of soil types  
Tolerant of wet/poorly drained soils  
Provides good year-round production of quality feed  
Does not frost off in winter as readily as phalaris and cocksfoot

## LIMITATIONS

Relatively slow to establish  
Heavy grazing, particularly during late spring/summer may reduce persistence particularly in drier marginal areas  
Temperate types need significant summer rainfall or irrigation to maintain high production and persistence  
May cause animal health problem known as 'Fescue Foot'

## PASTURE TYPE AND USE

Tall fescue is principally sown in permanent pastures for cattle and sheep grazing.

## WHERE IT GROWS

**Rainfall:** Greater than 650 millimetres for the spring summer active types preferably with summer rain less than 450 millimetres for summer dormant (winter-active) varieties.

**Soils:** Grows across a wide range of soil types from sandy to heavy clay soils. Tall fescue tolerates wet soils and short periods of flooding, but also has moderate drought tolerance. Tall fescue can tolerate soil acidity below pH Ca 4.8, and moderately high levels of soil aluminium (up to 20 per cent of CEC). However, it is most productive when soil pH Ca is 5.0 to 6.5. On the more acid soils with high levels of exchangeable aluminium liming may be required. It can also tolerate moderately saline soils (greater than 8 dS per metre(ECe).

**Temperature:** Tall fescue is a cool season grass and is suited to areas with mild to warm summers and cool to mild winters. It is more tolerant of frost in early winter than cocksfoot and phalaris. \*Terms and conditions apply.

# Brutus Summer Active Tall Fescue

## PLANT DESCRIPTION

**Plant:** A deep rooted, tufted, largely hairless perennial, with erect, unbranched tillers arising from deep underground rhizomes (horizontal stems). It can grow to 2 metres tall at flowering.

**Leaves:** Numerous dark green basal leaves, 4 to 15 millimetre wide and 10 to 60 centimetres long. Leaves are rolled in bud, becoming flat and tapered at the end. The upper leaf surface is dull and the lower leaf surface is smooth glossy with the leaf edges rough to touch.

**Seeds:** The seed is about the size and shape of ryegrass, with 420,000 to 500,000 seeds per kilogram.

## ESTABLISHMENT

**Grasses and/or Cereal:** Cocksfoot, phalaris, ryegrass

**Legumes:** Subterranean, red and white clovers, lotus, lucerne.

**Sowing/Planting rates in mixtures:** 3 to 10 kilograms per hectare. If using a more vigorous grass species such as perennial ryegrass a seeding rate of less than 2 kilogram per hectare of ryegrass is preferred.

**Sowing/Planting rates as single species:** 6 to 15 kilograms per hectare.

**Sowing time:** The best time to sow tall fescue is in autumn to early winter (March - June) when soil moisture is adequate. In high altitude, high rainfall areas, spring sowing (September) can also be successful.

**Inoculation:** At sowing, a compound or starter fertiliser (containing nitrogen, phosphorus and sulphur) should be used. If applying fertiliser with seed, nitrogen rates should not exceed 20 kilograms N per hectare.

## MANAGEMENT

**Maintenance fertiliser:** Phosphorus and sulphur are the major nutrients of concern particularly to promote good clover growth, and hence adequate nitrogen for the grass. Annual applications of these nutrients will depend on soil nutrient levels. At moderate stocking rates of 5 to 7 DSE per hectare, a maintenance dressing of 125 kilograms per hectare of single superphosphate is often adequate. If tall fescue is not sown with a legume, nitrogen fertiliser will be required. Deficiencies of molybdenum and other trace elements should be corrected.

**Grazing/Cutting:** Most tall fescue cultivars exhibit poor seedling vigour, resulting in slow establishment. Grazing management during the first 12 months after sowing is particularly important to ensure a satisfactory plant population. Establishing stands of tall fescue should only be grazed when the root system is well developed and will not be pulled out of the ground. Once established, the pasture should be kept within the 'active growth' phase to maximise pasture growth rates and feed quality, allow rapid post-grazing recovery, and encourage companion legumes. During autumn and winter (nonreproductive phase) tall fescue should be grazed in the range of 5 to 15 centimetres. In spring (reproductive phase), tall fescue should be grazed in the range of 3 to 10 centimetres (when pasture mass reaches around 2 to 3 tonne DM per hectare) to prevent stem development and optimize palatability. Such intensive grazing means that the grazing rotation needs to be reduced to 12 to 14 days during spring.

**Ability to Spread:** Will regenerate from seed, but has poor seedling vigour. Is able to spread slowly vegetatively by short rhizomes.

**Weed Potential:** Low weed potential.

**Major Pests:** Tall fescue can be attacked by pasture scarabs (but is more tolerant than most other temperate grasses), red legged earth mites, blue oat mites, field crickets, slugs and snails.

**Major Diseases:** Leaf diseases (e.g. rust, blights) occasionally occur on tall fescue, particularly in humid summer conditions.

**Herbicide Susceptibility:** Herbicides are available to selectively control broadleaf weeds. Generally applied after first leaf stage.

## ANIMAL PRODUCTION

**Feeding value:** Tall fescue has a high nutritive value comparing favourably to perennial ryegrass and phalaris. Digestibility ranges from 60 to 80 per cent DMD, metabolisable energy from 8.5 to 11.5 megajoules and crude protein from 7.5 to 25 per cent.

**Palatability:** Palatable.

**Production Potential:** Valuable feed for maintenance, growing and finishing livestock provided management maintains pasture in vegetative phase and adequate clover.

**Livestock Disorders/Toxicity:** Sporadic reports of 'fescue foot' in stock grazing tall fescue dominant pasture. Symptoms include heat stress, severe lameness, reduced feed intake and poor weight gains. Fescue foot is caused by a toxin 'ergovaline' produced by a fungus (endophyte) associated with tall fescue plants. This condition is not common as current cultivars either have no or very low levels of endophyte.



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