

# Recommendation for Brome/Alfalfa

## General Information:

This cool season grass and legume mix is considered one of the best nesting covers for hen pheasants by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. When combined with nearby native grass plantings it makes a complete ecosystem for the pheasants. The 13# brome rate used for filter strips makes a somewhat dense planting for pheasants, but the primary purpose of the filter strip is improving water quality. The alfalfa fixes nitrogen from the air to aid the growth of the brome and attracts insects that are a food source for the pheasants.

## Methods of planting:

The best method for planting is to prepare a seedbed 3" to 4" in depth and contact your ag supplier. Deliver the seed to them and have them mix 75# to 100# of DAP, potash, or pelletized lime/acre and air flow the seed on to the area. Then pack with a culti-packer. Do not disk or field cultivate (This will bury the seed too deep and significantly reduce germination). If there is not a culti-packer available to use, pack the ground with your dual-wheeled tractor until the entire area has been covered. This is done to press excess air out of the seedbed and make it firm to improve seed to soil contact. The Champaign County SWCD can help arrange the use of the Pheasants Forever culti-packer for your project.

The Champaign County SWCD can also arrange the use of a no-till drill for planting switchgrass directly into a seedbed of soybean stubble. If you are planting into corn stalks it is better to work the ground first to prepare an adequate seedbed.

## Calculating seed requirements:

The rate for filter strips is 13# of brome and 3-5# of alfalfa with 32# of oats as a companion crop.

## Planting information:

Depth:  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch-don't burry it

Planting dates: Spring-early spring to May 15<sup>th</sup>

Late summer- August 10<sup>th</sup> to September 10<sup>th</sup>