



**“Amazing results are created, not by coincidence or luck.** The level of quality and science that goes into Brier Ridge products are the first step in creating a sound plan to produce and harvest world class animals consistently”. - Travis Haney, Property Engineers

## Food Plot Preparation: Decisions, Decisions

Spring is here and many of us have the “itch” for hunting season. Some have started and others are beginning to plant food plots. A fair amount of preparation and hard work is involved in creating a lush food plot and there are many key factors in establishing it successfully. Consider the key points below.

### Site Selection

Site selection is an important step in food plot preparation. Consider whether the site is a low and/or wet area, or drier soil environment. This is critical, as some plants perform better based on the soil environment:

- **Low, Wet, Heavy Soil:** Plants that perform well in low, wet or heavy soil environments include brassicas, ryegrasses, and some clovers and legumes. Some recommended mixes here include [Deer Country Field Mix](#) or [Horn Honey Mix](#). If wet soils are too wet to plant in spring but dry up in summer, a fall seeded annual plot like [Autumn Energy](#), [Rut N Ready](#) or [Bulls-Eye Turnips](#) would be ideal.
- **Dry Areas:** For plots in drier areas, mixes containing red clover, alfalfa or brassicas would be good candidates. Fall seeding is again ideal for lighter soil, as many areas get enough fall rain to carry the plot through to winter - whereas, if seeded in spring, summer temps and lack of rain can stress some species.
- **Shaded Areas:** Areas with reduced sunlight or shaded conditions like logging roads or wooded trails need fescues, perennial ryegrasses and clovers that are shade tolerant. A mix for this situation is [Deer Country Trail Mix](#).

*Plants need water (not too much), nutrients and sunlight to grow. While it seems obvious, note that because a location looks great in fall (without tree leaf canopy), the best time to select a site is in spring or late spring, after the canopy from the trees has closed. A majority of species need at least 3-4 hours of direct sunlight per day.*

### Plot Selection

Mixes are typically designated as annual or perennial. If you like to change plots from year to year, stick to annual mixes, as they contain plants that only produce vegetation/fruits once. An example of a great annual mix is Rut N Ready, formulated with species known to last into winter months, but die off prior to the following spring.

For a plot that persists for multiple years, select a mix that contains perennial plants like Horn Honey, for example, which contains clovers and chicory that, when managed properly, can last multiple years. While some mixes contain a hybrid of annual/perennial, management of nutrients is a key factor for success.




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### About The Corner Post

The Corner Post is a periodic email series with timely forage tips from the agronomic experts at Forage First and La Crosse Seed. If you have a question you’d like us to answer, contact us: [info@laxseed.com](mailto:info@laxseed.com) or 800.356.7333

## Planting Date

The planting date correlates with the species used and where the plot is located geographically. As mixes have a variety of species, the time of planting depends both on mix components, as well as when the desired time is for the plot to be available to your game. View considerations below, plus pg. 6 of our [Brier Ridge Management Guide](#).

- Brassicas, like rapeseed, turnips, radishes and kale, tend to be browsed after a killing frost due to sugars flushing the leaves, and are a consideration for plots that last into late fall. Therefore, you'd want to plant approximately 60 days prior to a killing frost in your geography.
- Clovers and grasses tend to become dormant after a killing frost, and are a consideration for spring or early fall. This allows them to gain enough vegetative growth to provide nutrition for game throughout the summer months. Clovers and grasses can also be planted later in early fall, but by planting in spring you have the opportunity for lush establishment early and all summer long.

## Soil Test

A soil test is the most important step to establish a lush, productive food plot. When soil testing, take multiple samples from each site, mix thoroughly in a plastic container, and provide a sufficient sample to your local cooperative or store to be sent in.

Emphasis must be put on the plastic container, as metals from metal containers can attach to soil particles and skew results.

**[REVIEW MORE SOIL TEST INFO AT HTTPS://BIT.LY/2JEVJUJ](https://bit.ly/2JEVJUJ)** to increase your chance for success.



**Once your plan is set, it's time to prepare for seeding. Next week we'll cover tips for food plot establishment, including burn down and tillage recommendations and the importance of seed to soil contact, plus management tips and more.**

## About In The Crosshairs

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