

Supplemental Planting for Wild Turkeys

Spring Planting- is a very important time to consider supplemental planting, as this is when poults need insects and small seed, as well as brood habitat on timber stand edges. Planting can occur in mid-April to mid- June. Recommended plantings are:

- Brown- Top Millet
- Grain sorghums
- Cow Peas
- Soybeans
- Corn
- Chufa

Check with your local agricultural extension agency for recommended seed and fertilize rates. NWTf provides information about purchasing seed and technical bulletins for planting at their website: www.nwtf.org . There are also some discounts for purchasing seed with some states chapters if a landowner is a NWTf member or sponsor.

Fall Planting- usually most landowners consider this as the most important time to plant supplemental food plots, when actually spring and summer foods are more critical periods for helping new born fawns and turkey poults, and providing nutrition to adult deer for milk production in females and antler development in males. The winter plots provide some use for forage, but are utilized primarily for harvesting or viewing wildlife on a landowner's property. Plant a combination of these seed mixes in September and October. Here are some seed recommendations for fall planting:

- Certified Wheat
- Oates
- Ladino (white) clover
- Crimson Clover
- Elbon Rye
- Chickory
- Turnips

Native Warm Season Grasses- are still a relatively new concept for planting by many private landowners, but studies are showing in consideration of long term cost to the landowner, and longevity for food, insects, and cover that NWSG may be the best "bang for the buck". Landowners should consult your local NRCS agent for grasses suited for their soils and region of the state. A food plot plan with NWSG planted along the field edges (30'-40') along with cool season or summer plantings (centers) creates excellent nesting cover or staging areas for white-tail deer to use and what is known as a "feathered edge" for land diversity. Although NWSG are expensive at costs of \$5- \$15 per pound, only 2 pounds to the acre are needed in installation of these grasses. Once established they only need to be maintained by bush hogging or prescribe burning periodically.