

Perennial Food Plot Fact Sheet

North
American
LAND TRUST



Have food plots?

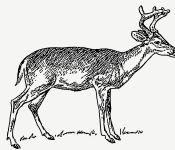
Reduce cost and increase value with native perennials

Perennial plants germinate, grow, flower, produce seed, go dormant for a period through summer or winter (depending on whether they are warm-season plants or cool season plants), then grow back from the root system the following season. They continue to do this for a few to many years, depending on the species.¹

This regrowth significantly lowers the cost and labor of replanting on a yearly basis or more, while creating beautiful, natural, forage and cover for the wildlife you want to attract to your property. With proper installation and management, such as seasonal mowing, grazing, and prescribed burning, native food plots can offer dependable wildlife habitat for years to come.²



Bobwhite



Whitetail



Turkey

Great Choice Perennials for Wildlife



Native Grasses

Native grasses create cover for fawning, bird nesting, and thermal protection in winter. Throughout all seasons, these grasses provide feeding area for upland game by providing both plant parts like leaves or stems and seeds. This cover increases insect activity, important for nesting and migratory birds which feed their young primarily insects during the breeding season.³



Native Legumes

Native legumes are an excellent food source for wildlife, help to improve soil conditions, and are a great groundcover throughout the year. There are also a diversity of native legumes that are hardy in dry to wet conditions, and can tolerate a range of light requirements, from forest understory to full sun fields.



Native Forbs

Native forbs (herbaceous flowering perennials) offer a variety of flowering colors and shapes throughout the growing season, offering beauty and resources for pollinators and wildlife. These plants, once established, will bloom without fail for years to come, and provide winter habitat and food for birds and other animals.

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Examples of Native Perennials*



Native Grasses



Switchgrass
(*Panicum virgatum*)



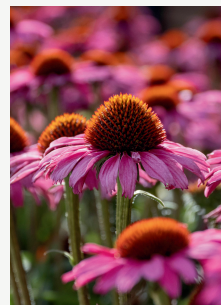
Little Bluestem
(*Schizachyrium scoparium*)



Milkvetch
(*Astragalus* sp.)



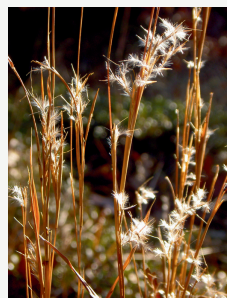
Showy Tick-Trefoil
(*Desmodium canadense*)



Purple Coneflower
(*Echinacea purpurea*)



Black Eyed Susan
(*Rudbeckia hirta*)



Broomsedge
(*Andropogon virginicus*)



Big Bluestem
(*Andropogon gerardii*)



Purple Prairie Clover
(*Dalea purpurea*)



Wild Senna
(*Senna marilandica*)



Tickseed
(*Coreopsis* ssp.)



Goldenrod
(*Solidago* sp.)



Gamma Grass
(*Tripsacum dactyloides*)



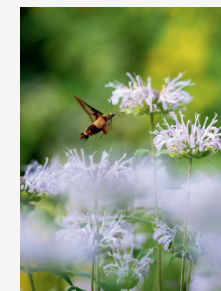
River Oats
(*Chasmanthium latifolium*)



Goats Rue
(*Tephrosia virginiana*)



False Indigo
(*Amorpha fruticosa*)



Bee Balm
(*Monarda* sp.)



Blazingstar
(*Liatris* sp.)



Bottlebrush Grass
(*Elymus hystrix*)



Purpletop Grass
(*Tridens flavus*)



Illinois Bundleflower
(*Desmanthus illinoensis*)



Bush Clover
(*Lespedeza capitata*)



Milkweed
(*Asclepias* sp.)



Golden Alexander
(*Zizia aurea*)

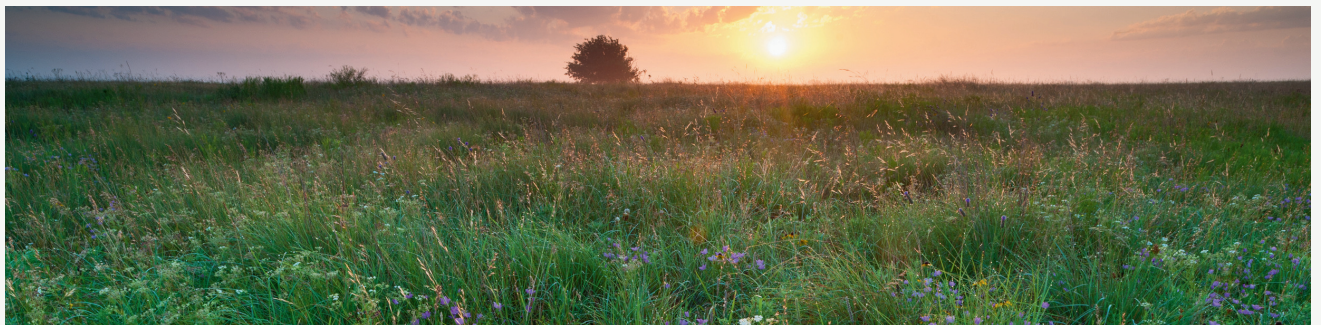
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Mix with Native Annuals for Improved Results

Incorporating annuals can be one of the fastest and most effective ways to see immediate results in newly planted areas. They grow quickly, and reseed themselves for the following years growth. They can be a great addition to a food plot or meadow mix to increase first-year growth, while perennials take time to get established.

Most traditional seed mixes available however include weedy and aggressive non-native annual species like clovers or grasses that can escape intended plantings, creating an invasive species problem. When available, the majority of wildlife will select native forage over non-native forage due to the greater variety available in natural habitats. ⁴



Let us curate a planting plan for your property

Conservation Management Plans with NALT

North American Land Trust biologists are experienced in site assessments, bio-inventories, mapping, and native habitat management and would be happy to create a custom plan based on your region and your conservation goals.

Reach out to us today to learn more about a consultation and fully customized plan for your property. >>>

Work with Us



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View our website for more information
www.northamericanlandtrust.org

Harper, C. 2019. Landowners' Guide to Wildlife Food Plots PB 1874. University of Tennessee Extension ¹

Seymour, R. and John Seymour. 2012. Six Basic Elements For a Successful Native Grass and Forb Establishment. 5th Edition. Roundstone Native Seed, LLC. ²

Mossy Oak - Tips for using Native Grasses for Wildlife Cover ³

Mossy Oak - The Importance of Native Plants for Deer Diet ⁴

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Examples of Native Annuals*



Native Legumes



Partridge Pea
(*Chamaecrista fasciculata*)



Rattlebox
(*Crotalaria sagittalis*)



Running Buffalo Clover
(*Trifolium stoloniferum*) E

Native Forbs



Sneezeweed
(*Helenium amarum*)



American Bellflower
(*Campanula americana*)



Venus' Looking Glass
(*Triodanis perfoliata*)

The Problem with Traditional Food Plot Mixes

Traditional food plot seed mixes, and erosion control mixes, typically include almost exclusively non-native species.

These species, like imported cool-season grasses, and problematic groundcovers like non-native legumes and clovers, are often aggressive, which is why they are selected for difficult to grow areas. These traits can also make them difficult to control.

These species can outcompete native plants for sunlight and nutrients, and may require chemical treatments for long-term control. Also, they are great at spreading into unintended areas.

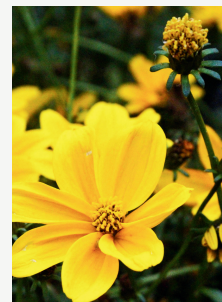
Switching to a native food plot or groundcover mix not only provides all the benefits outlined in this packet, like lower maintenance and lower long-term costs, it also creates immense value to natural areas and the fauna that utilize them.

For advice and information on how to convert an existing food plot, meadow, lawn, or agricultural area to a native food plot or native pollinator meadow, **reach out to us.**

We create beautiful places.



False Foxglove
(*Agalinis* sp.)



Beggars Ticks
(*Bidens* sp.)



Lemon Mint
(*Monarda citriodora*)



Paintbrushes
(*Castilleja* sp.)



Touch-me-not
(*Impatiens* sp.)



Blue Curls
(*Trichostema* sp.)



Blue Toadflax
(*Linaria canadensis*)



Smartweed
(*Persicaria* sp.)



Sweet Everlasting
(*Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium*)