



# NATIVE SEED MIX RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR BUFFER STRIPS IN AGRICULTURAL AREAS  
WITHIN LUCAS COUNTY, OH

THIS GUIDANCE IS MEANT TO BE REFERENCED BY CONTRACTORS AND LANDOWNERS WORKING TO  
VEGETATE RIPARIAN (STREAMSIDE) BUFFER STRIPS AND CONSERVATION AREAS ALONG WATERWAYS

## WHY PLANT NATIVES?

PLANTING RIPARIAN BUFFERS WITH APPROPRIATE NATIVE SEED (FORBS AND GRASSES) CAN  
PROVIDE MORE BENEFIT TO THE PROPERTY OWNER'S INTERESTS AND AREA WILDLIFE COMPARED  
TO TURF GRASS AND RELATED SPECIES.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- **IMPROVEMENT IN WATER QUALITY**

Native plants can reduce the amount pollutants (e.g., nutrients – nitrogen and phosphorus) in surface water by filtering runoff and absorbing nutrients before they enter a waterway

- **REDUCTIONS IN LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE OF BUFFER STRIP**

Little to no watering or fertilizer needed  
Minimal mowing needed in an established area

- **BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE**

If designed for a specific region, native seed mixes contain a wide variety of flowering plants that provide blooms throughout the growing season. Continuous and diverse blooms create a beautiful buffer area, whether it borders an active agricultural field or suburban backyard.

- **ATTRACTION OF NATIVE WILDLIFE**

Native wildlife has evolved together with native plants so they are well-suited to provide for each other's needs (e.g., food, protection, pollination, etc.)

- **PROMOTION OF REGIONAL NATIVE BIODIVERSITY**

The absence of native vegetation cover is a major factor in the decline of many animal and insect species in Northwest Ohio

- **REDUCTIONS IN SOIL EROSION**

Many native plants have longer root systems compared to turf grasses; these longer roots help to keep soil in place during wet weather events

**SEE BACK PAGE FOR RECOMMENDED MAINTENANCE,  
SUGGESTED SEED MIX, AND AREA RESOURCES.**

# SUGGESTED SEED MIX

## SUGGESTED SEED MIX FOR AGRICULTURAL FIELD BUFFER AREAS

OHIO PRAIRIE NURSERY (OPN) ITEM #031820-1\*

• EXPECTED HEIGHT RANGE: 3FT TO 7FT

- SUGGESTED SEEDING RATE: HYDRO-SEEDED/BROADCAST/DRILLED AT 10 POUNDS/ACRE
  - DOES WELL IN PRAIRIE/MEADOW HABITAT WITH FULL SUN

Species Name	Common Name	%
<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	Virginia Wild Rye	25.62%
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian Grass	16.31%
<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>	Partridge Pea	15.94%
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem	12.50%
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Nodding Wild Rye	12.50%
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switch Grass	6.25%
<i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>	Indian Blanket	2.50%
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Ox Eye Sunflower	2.19%
<i>Agrostis perennans</i>	Autumn Bentgrass	1.56%
<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	Illinois Bundleflower	1.31%
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	Purple Prairie Clover	0.81%
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	0.69%
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly Weed	0.44%
<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	Cup Plant	0.37%
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild Bergamot	0.31%
<i>Vernonia altissima</i>	Tall Ironweed	0.31%
<i>Aster laevis</i>	Smooth Aster	0.31%
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	0.06%

DISCLAIMER: OPN DESIGNED THIS SEED MIX SPECIFICALLY FOR LUCAS COUNTY AND THE NORTHWEST OHIO REGION. THIS MIX IS PROVIDED HERE AS OPTION/EXAMPLE AND IS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE THROUGH OPN. CONTRACTORS AND PROPERTY OWNERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER THIS MIX WHEN MAKING THEIR SELECTION. COMPARABLE SEED MIXES MAY BE AVAILABLE FROM OTHER VENDORS BUT IT IS SUGGESTED THAT LANDOWNERS CONSULT WITH LUCAS SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO EVALUATE MIX SUITABILITY FOR LOCAL CONDITIONS.

LUCAS COUNTY  
Storm Water Utility



### RECOMMENDED SEEDING METHODS:

- Fall is best because the seeds will be going through their natural cycle of cold, moist conditions resulting in faster germination. If planted in the spring, some species will germinate that year, but some will delay until they have those cold, moist conditions resulting in later germination - often the following spring. **Good seed to soil contact is preferred for higher germination rates.**

### RECOMMENDED MAINTENANCE:

- **First Year Management:** Periodic mowing and/or selective removal of targeted undesirable plants
- **Long-term Management:** Mow once in spring and then leave tall throughout fall, winter, and early spring (Native wildlife will lay eggs and/or hibernate in dormant vegetation)

### PLANTING METHODS:

- **Drill Seeding** (recommended for best seed to soil contact)
- **Broadcast Seeding** (some type of light tillage or culti-packing for soil preparation required; most cost-effective)
- **Hydroseeding** (most expensive)

### AREA RESOURCES:

Lucas Soil & Water Conservation District: [lucasswcd.org](http://lucasswcd.org)

Ohio Prairie Nursery: [opnseed.com](http://opnseed.com)

Greater Toledo Lake Erie Clear Choices Clean Water: [toledolakeerie.clearchoicescleanwater.org](http://toledolakeerie.clearchoicescleanwater.org)