



# FACT SHEET

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

*Helping People Help the Land*

## RESEEDING BURNED AREAS FOR HOME OWNERS

### Where Needed?

**REVEGETATION** of burned areas with grass or a mixture of grass and forbs will help protect the soil from erosive winter rains. Grass or a mixture of grass and forb seed can be planted in areas that do not have enough good seed remaining under the ash.

### Which Plants?

**WHEN SELECTING PLANTS**, consider the depth and types of soil, average annual rainfall, availability of seed, reseeding ability, and the amount of growth produced. The most commonly used plants are listed below:

**BLANDO BROME** is a winter growing, self-seeding annual grass which is naturally found in California grasslands. It is adapted to climatic variations and grows 20 inches or taller on better soils. It can be planted with other annual grasses in any proportion. It should not be over 70 percent of a mix with annual legumes and should not be planted with flowers or perennial grasses. Average annual precipitation should be at least 12 inches.

**CUCAMONGA BROME** is a fast, winter growing, upright, early maturing, native grass that grows 20 inches or taller if fertility is good. Best suited as a quick cover on droughty, sandy, or low fertility soils below 3,000 feet. Provides quick growth in the fall. Matures earlier (April) and is more tolerant of droughty conditions than **BLANDO**. It should not be over 70 percent of the mix with annual legumes. Average annual precipitation should be at least 12 inches.

**ZORRO ANNUAL FESCUE** is a low-volume, winter growing, self-seeding, annual grass that grows from 10 to 24 inches high. It is a common naturalized plant of California grasslands and matures earlier than Blando brome. Zorro is very drought tolerant and has provided excellent erosion control on low-fertility and acidic (pH 4.5) soils. It is compatible with perennial native grasses and shrubs. Zorro may constitute up to 70 percent of a mix if used with annual legumes, and up to 25 percent with flowers or perennial grasses. Zorro will appear weedy if used with flowers, but will not be overly competitive. Average annual precipitation should be at least 10 inches.

**HYKON ROSE CLOVER** is an annual, reseeding legume for well drained droughty soils which are slightly acidic (pH 5.5 to 7.0). It grows 10 to 15 inches high, matures early and is preferred for critical erosion areas. Its ability to make its own nitrogen makes it well suited for low fertility soils and it will help fertilize reseeding grasses. The seed needs to be inoculated before planting. Average annual precipitation should be at least 10 inches.

**BARLEY** is an annual, winter growing, feed grain that grows from 10 to 36 inches tall depending upon the variety. It is meant to provide first-year stabilization and does not persist after the second season. Barley is vigorous and performs well on disturbed areas and most soils including those with saline and alkali conditions. It establishes quickly and adjusts its growth and tillering to moisture and fertility. Its fibrous root system effectively stabilizes soils. It should be mowed to 3-4 inches high after maturity for fire hazard control. Preference should be given to short-stemmed varieties.

**DEERWEED** is a suberect, bushy, native perennial up to 4 feet in height, with green slender branches, compound leaves and yellowish flowers. It occurs on dry slopes and seems to come in after wildfire burns. It is a good honey plant and is considered good food and cover for wildlife. It is wild collected and sometimes seed is not available. Seed needs scarification for good germination and establishment. It is usually planted in a mixture with less aggressive species.

**ANNUAL RYEGRASS** is a fast growing, robust upright annual grass that grows 24 inches or more if fertility is good. It is short lived (two to three years), tolerates heavier textured soils and pH of 6 to 8.5 and uses most of the available nutrients. Rye grass is very competitive and should not comprise more than 50 percent of a mix. Do not plant it with perennial grasses.

Seeding Guide	Recommended Plants and Mixtures	Seeding Rate	Adjusted Rate	Seeding Rate
		lbs/Acre	lbs/Acre	lbs/10,000 Sq. Ft. Lot
	<sup>1</sup>			
	1. Zorro annual fescue ( <i>Vulpia myuros</i> )	8		2.0
	Hykon rose clover ( <i>Trifolium hirtum</i> )	3	4.5 <sup>2</sup>	0.7
	Deerweed ( <i>Lotus scoparius</i> )	2		0.5
	California poppy ( <i>Eschschozia californica</i> )	0.5		0.12 (2 oz)
	2. Blando brome ( <i>Bromus mollis</i> )	18		4.0
	3. Cucamonga brome ( <i>Bromus carinatus</i> ) <sup>3</sup>	10		2.3
	4. Zorro annual fescue ( <i>Vulpia myuros</i> )	12		2.75
	5. Cucamonga brome ( <i>Bromus carinatus</i> ) and Hykon rose clover ( <i>Trifolium hirtum</i> ) <sup>3</sup>	10 9		2.3 2.0
	6. Barley ( <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> )	125		29.0
	7. Annual ryegrass ( <i>Lolium multiflorum</i> )	8		2.0

<sup>1</sup> Recommended Seeding Rates are based on uncoated seed and Pure Live Seed content (percent purity multiplied by percent germination of at least 80 percent).

<sup>2</sup> Increase rate by 1.5 if seed coated by the supplier with inoculants or other materials. No adjustment is needed when you inoculate the clover seed at the site.

<sup>3</sup> One or more of the following native plants can be added to the mixture: California poppy ½ lb., Annual lupines 1 lb., California buckwheat 1–2 lbs.

## Planting

**METHODS OF SEEDING** include broadcasting by hand, broadcasting with a hand operated seeder, hydroseeding, and seeding by air. Most home owners and small landowners will find broadcasting to be the most economical method. Hydroseeding requires roads for equipment access and a nearby water supply. Aerial seeding is used on large acreages.

## When to Seed

Timing of seeding is critical for success and will vary with location and elevation. Ideally, seeding should be done before winter rains pack the burn ash. Timeliness of rains will affect how well the plants will grow, and at cooler temperatures plants germinate and grow more slowly. As a guide: recommended seeding times in Northern California are October through November and February, and recommended seeding times in Southern California are November 15 through January 15.

Exposed earth areas, such as roads and firebreaks and steep embankments, should be protected with straw mulch at the rate of 2 tons per acre and anchored by punching with shovels or crimping equipment. A 74- pound bale of straw would cover 800 square feet.

## Fire Danger

**REDUCING FIRE HAZARDS** after the annual grasses and clovers mature in the spring needs to be planned. Safety Experts recommend clearing at least a 30-foot space around structures down to ground level and another 70 feet beyond that reduced to below 18 inches in height. Wait until the grasses and clovers set their seed before mowing or clipping. Using a lawn mower will produce a safe zone around structures. Mowing to a three or four inch height with a nylon filament weed whip or similar equipment will produce a “safe zone” in the 30 to 70 foot zone. Consider mowing around shrubs and trees beyond 100 feet. The resulting straw mulch will provide erosion protection against early rains.

## Where to Get Help

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** is available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, local Resource Conservation District, county Cooperative Extension Service, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection offices.