



Loading one of the seed hoppers on a Truax no-till drill during spring planting.

## FALL VS. SPRING SEEDING

Traditionally, seeding is thought of as a spring activity, but it can also occur during the dormant season. Fall seeding works well for restoration projects completed in the summer. While there are some noteworthy advantages to fall seeding, seeding in either spring or fall will produce good results. In drought-prone regions, seeding should be timed to take advantage of the available moisture in the area.

### FALL OR “DORMANT” SEEDING

- › Fall seeding imitates natural reseeding. Dormant seedling can take place when soils are dry enough to work.
- › Good seed-to-soil contact occurs through precipitation and the freeze-thaw cycle.
- › Natural stratification and scarification occur; natural changes within the seed or to the seed coat during the winter enhance germination in the spring.
- › Mulching is an important element of dormant seeding to protect the soil.
- › Some seed may be lost to decay and wildlife consumption during the winter.
- › Establishment may be hindered by growth of winter annuals in the fall.

### FROST SEEDING

- › Frost seeding is the act of broadcasting seed onto or drilling into frozen soil.
- › Good seed-to-soil contact occurs through the freeze-thaw cycle.
- › Natural stratification and scarification occur; natural changes within the seed or to the seed coat during the winter enhance germination in the spring.

- › Mulching may be done.
- › Some seed may be lost to decay and wildlife consumption during the winter.
- › Establishment may be hindered by growth of winter annuals in the fall.

### SPRING SEEDING

- › Cool season species germinate soon after seeding.
- › Germination of warm season species generally occurs within three weeks of the soil temperature reaching 55°F (13°C).
- › Seed loss due to decay and wildlife consumption is minimized.
- › Seed-to-soil contact should be accomplished by working the seed into the soil 1/4”-1/2” deep.
- › Seeding may be delayed until weed control is applied to improve establishment.
- › Irrigation during dry weather periods is necessary for proper germination.
- › Light mulching is an important element of seeding to protect both the seed and soil and retain moisture.
- › When planting native grasses for biomass, seeding generally takes place during the spring when soil temperatures at a 3” depth are near 55°F and rising.