

pasture renovation



The first step to renovate a pasture is reducing competition. Most degraded pastures will have weeds that need to be killed. This can be done with herbicide (above), tilling (below), or a combination of both. An excellent resource is *Dryland Pastures in Montana and Wyoming*, which describes species, cultivars, seeding techniques, and grazing management. It is available on the Web at www.montana.edu/wwwpb/pubs/eb19.pdf



Because most forage species have small seeds, they require precise and fairly shallow placement in the seedbed. This is best accomplished with a drill. Broadcast seeding is not recommended in most situations.

Below is an example of what a finished seeded plot may look like. The plot has been tilled, smoothed, and seeded. Erosion control mats are being placed in this plot, which may be an option for small seedings. These help conserve moisture and lessen the effects of erosion.

Before planting, seedbeds should ideally be firm, moist, free of weeds, and free of debris. In order to lessen the risk of failure, time the seeding to take advantage of spring moisture, either rain or melting snow. Preparing the seedbed with a roller (as shown upper right) or other implement will be helpful if the soil has been tilled. This will improve the seed-to-soil contact necessary for germination.



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