

BACKWOODS —BOUNTY—

SPECIALTY WILDLIFE FOOD PLOT SEEDS

Planting Instructions for MIRAGE

Mirage is a very diverse mixture of warm season annual broadleaf and grass plants to provide a very impressive jungle of forages to provide feed and bedding habitat for deer over the summer as well as produce seed to attract game birds as well.

Seeding Rate: 30-50 lbs./ acre

Seeding Depth: ¼-½"

Planting Dates: Zone 4&5 June 10th-July 15th

Zone 6&7 June 1st– August 1st

Seedbed Selection and Preparation:

1. Select your food plot location that has ample sunlight and free of competing vegetation. If the location has existing vegetation, refer to step 5 if the vegetation there will be too much competition for this mix.
2. Taking a soil sample to test the soil pH and fertility levels several months before establishing your food plot is the most beneficial action you can take to ensure success. Take soil cores from various locations in the field to get a representative sample of the field and select the plants/mix on the soil sample submittal form. If the species in your mix are not on the form, please write them in the box on the submittal form. Soil samples can be sent to any university soil testing lab or commercial soil testing lab. You can reach out to your local extension service and view the King's Agriseeds Soil Sampling Procedure factsheet for more information.
3. Once soil tests results are received, observe the recommendations for growing the crop this year. Apply the recommended rates of lime to adjust the soil pH several months before planting, if possible, to allow it time to change the pH. If you plan to till your plot, working in the lime may help it to adjust pH quicker. Applying lime without a soil test may lead to poorer production due to pH levels outside of the optimum range. Optimum soil pH for most crops is 6.2-6.5.



Planting Instructions for MIRAGE Continued

4. Apply the recommended rate of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium fertilizers per the soil test report as well. Applying fertilizer based on a soil test recommendation can help you to apply needed fertility without under or oversupplying this input. Fertilizer can be broadcast on the surface or worked into the soil with shallow tillage.

5. Seedbed preparation depends upon site location and availability of equipment but the most common is to disk the soil to loosen up the surface and kill the plants already there. If you do not completely kill all the undesired plants with tillage, you may want to spray the area with a herbicide prior to planting. If planning to no-till (More in number 8) the seeds, herbicide will be needed to control the weeds first.

If you decide to spray, be sure to use a herbicide that will complete the task. If you are looking to kill all plant vegetation in the plot a non-selective herbicide (glyphosate) would work best. If you are trying to kill only grasses, a herbicide selective for grasses (such as clethodim) should be used. And if you only want to kill broadleaf plants, a herbicide selective for broadleaves (such as 2,4-D) should be used.

6. If you have the ability to plant the seed with a grain drill, you will want to run it through the large box and calibrate the drill to put out 30-50 lbs./ acre (more info on drill calibration here <https://extension.psu.edu/calibration-of-grain-seed-drills>). Set the drill to plant the seed at ½ inch deep.

7. If you are tilling your seedbed, pull a cultipacker, drag, or roller across the plot to smooth out the surface and create a firm seedbed so that good seed to soil contact can be made.

8. Mirage should be sown at 30-50 lbs/ acre or 0.69- 1.15 lbs/ 1,000 sq. ft. Spread seed evenly across the area by hand or with a spinner spreader. To ensure your seeding rate is correct, seed a small area of a known size and use a weighted amount of seed that should cover the area to make sure your spreader is calibrated correctly. If you have some left or run out, adjust your spreading accordingly.

9. After spreading the seed, you want to lightly incorporate the seed into the soil about a 1/4"-1/2" deep. This is done best by using an implement that will scratch the surface and move some soil on top of the seed.

10. This is a summer annual mixture with various maturities of plant species. Flowering throughout the summer of the different species should be expected which should attract pollinators during the summer and the seed production will attract birds in the fall. Most species will mature in late summer to early fall and die off and the rest will die with the first heavy frost.

