



CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM PLANT GUIDE

LUPINE

Cultivars: Hederma

Seed Size: 13,000 - 42,000 seeds/pound

Form: Multi-stem Crown,
Legume

Area of Adaptation: There are many species of both native and introduced lupine. Lupines occur throughout the Pacific Northwest from the rainforests of the Olympic Peninsula to the Hanford Reservation where precipitation rarely exceeds 8-inches. Proper species selection is imperative when purchasing lupine seed. 'Hederma' pine lupine (sickle-keel lupine) originates from a native stand in the Willamette Valley. 'Hederma' is probably not adapted to the colder, harsher winters of the Inland PNW. White lupine is an annual, not adapted to the Inland Pacific Northwest, and not a suitable species for use in the CRP. Although there are no commercial varieties of lupine adapted to dryland environments of the Inland PNW, seed collected from native stands is sold in limited quantities.

Seeding: Lupine seed is highly variable in size and quality. Lupine seed tends to be hard seeded and should be scarified to improve germination. Seed size commonly varies between seed lots and even within a seed lot. Insect damage, heat damage, shrunken seeds, and fungal contamination are common problems with lupine seed. Therefore, it is extremely important to purchase only those seed lots which have an official, up-to-date seed test. Lupine seed should be seeded no deeper than 1/2". A carrier such as rice hulls or vermiculite will be needed to plant lupine seed with a drill due to the variable seed size. Broadcasting seed should be discouraged. Seed must be inoculated with the appropriate rhizobium and planted into a firm, well-packed seedbed. Seed should be planted in the spring for best emergence.

Management & Uses: Lupines can be high in alkaloids and cause crooked calf disease. Lupine poisoning is largely a combination of episodic climatic conditions that favor lupine growth and high alkaloid content and improper management of grazing animals. There are lupines that are low in alkaloids and are important pasture species in some parts of the world. Lupines fix nitrogen and are frequented by a host of insects. Many wild birds, especially young birds, depend on insects associated with lupine for food. Lupines are quite showy and are commonly used in natural landscaping and roadside beautification.

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