


# LOTUS XL BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL

- Tolerant of poorly drained, low pH soils
- High disease resistance
- Fast recovery after cutting
- Upright growth habit

Birdsfoot trefoil is a perennial legume that adapts well to production on poorly drained, low-pH soils. It can re-seed itself, is resistant to Phytophthora root rot and numerous alfalfa insects, responds well to fertilization and does not cause bloat in animals. As a result, it is being grown more often in the northern United States and southern Canada where production of other forage legumes is limited.

 The XL designation represents branded products that meet the DLF high-quality standard. XL brands contain one or more improved varieties.

## SEEDING RATES (LBS/ACRE)

MONOCULTURE  
MIX COMPONENT

**8 - 10**  
**4 - 5**

## SEED INFORMATION

SEEDS/LB **370,000**  
DEPTH (IN) **1/4**  
EMERGENCE (DAYS) **7**

## CHARACTERISTICS

ESTABLISHMENT	<b>SLOW</b>	PALATABILITY	<b>HIGH</b>
PERSISTENCE	<b>HIGH</b>	YIELD POTENTIAL	<b>MED</b>
DROUGHT TOLERANCE	<b>MED-HIGH</b>	GRAZING TOLERANCE	<b>HIGH</b>
WINTER HARDINESS	<b>HIGH</b>		

## PLANTING TIMES

SPRING PLANTING	<b>MAR - MAY</b>	LIFE CYCLE	<b>PERENNIAL</b>
FALL PLANTING	<b>AUG - OCT</b>		

## ADAPTATION

Birdsfoot trefoil is most productive in fertile, well drained soils with a close to neutral pH. However, birdsfoot trefoil can be grown on low pH (5.5) soils with low fertility and will tolerate short periods of flooding better than alfalfa. It can tolerate periods of drought and is more suited to soils prone to heaving. Alfalfa will outproduce birdsfoot trefoil by 50 to 80% on well drained, fertile soils, limiting birdsfoot trefoil to areas where alfalfa is difficult to produce.

## ESTABLISHMENT

Birdsfoot trefoil should be inoculated before planting to ensure sufficient nodulation of the root system for nitrogen fixation. A smooth, firm seedbed is recommended. Seeding depth should not be more than 1/4 inch. Early spring seeding is generally more successful than late summer seeding.

## HARVEST MANAGEMENT

When harvested for hay, first cutting should be taken at 1/10 bloom with second cutting mid-late August. To maintain birdsfoot trefoil stand, use management system providing sufficient regrowth between cuttings, allowing plant to reseed itself.

Heavy grazing may be needed in spring to reduce growth but close continuous grazing is not recommended since summer regrowth depends on energy supplied by top growth, not root reserves like alfalfa. Leave 3 to 4 inches of top growth when grazing. Avoid haying or grazing between September 1 and first killing frost so root reserves accumulate for better winter survival and spring growth. Birdsfoot trefoil is well suited for stockpiling since it maintains its leaves at maturity and after frosts. It responds to proper fertility management which should be determined by soil testing.