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## ***Germination Testing for Cereal Crops***

Any discussion about cereal crop seeding rates should include at least some consideration of germination levels. Leaving it as an unknown can wreak havoc for the seeded crop.

For wheat growers, germination testing could become very important this year due to the head scab (Fusarium head blight) issues we experienced. Because of its effect on seed quality, the disease is known to cause germination issues. For that reason, a germination test for wheat seed is highly recommended, with results best interpreted by a professional.

Those seeding cover crops may want to consider germination testing as well. It's the only way to know if you are getting close to a desired viable seeding rate, and can help eliminate a potential cause of emergence issues should they arise.

For an official seed germination test (\$17.00), send a two-pound sample to the Kansas Crop Improvement Association located at 2000 Kimball Ave. in Manhattan (66502). A sample submittal form can be printed from the KCIA website at: [www.kscrop.org/seed-lab.html](http://www.kscrop.org/seed-lab.html). Results are usually available in ten days to two weeks, so plan ahead for sample submission.

Home testing is an option as well, using a simple method involving paper towels, a rubber band, and a plastic bag. If done correctly, you can have results in 10 to 15 days.

If you are selling seed, make sure you are doing so according to the Kansas Seed Law. You can find it online at: <https://www.kscrop.org/seed-law.html>.

## ***Tall Fescues for Turf***

With September just around the corner, some homeowners may have cool season turf reseeding on their mind. With so many fescue varieties available, which one should you use?

It depends first on whether you are reseeding or over seeding. If you are over seeding, try and get the same variety or blend you planted last time. If you don't, you can end up with different textures, colors, or growth rates that can cause consistency issues in the stand. If seeding only a section of the lawn that you want to match the rest of the lawn, stay with what was used before.

If you want to completely reseed an area or don't care how it matches, your options are numerous. Our standby cultivar has been K-31 – with good reason. It's hardy. It holds green color well. Traffic doesn't seem to bother it much. It's well adapted to our climate. Unfortunately, it also grows quickly and can become coarse.

If you want to take a look at a little higher quality of turf, consider the ratings taken from the National Turfgrass Evaluation Trial. They help rank varieties based on color, greenup, quality and texture. The highest rated ones from 2012-2017 include: Rebounder, Michelangelo, Traverse 2, Black Tail, Reflection, GTO, Thor, Paramount, Temple, Valkyrie LS, Avenger II, Technique, 4th Millennium SRP, Rockwell, Titanium 2LS, Rowdy, Regenerate, Leonardo, Falcon V, Firebird 2, Terrano, Maestro, Grande 3, Bloodhound and Hot Rod.

They may not end up being what you want to plant - large open areas still do well planted to K-31. If you are wanting to give something new a try, any of these would be good options.