

# Alfalfa

Alfalfa is a bushy perennial legume with a large root system.

**Re-vegetation Series:**

This is a series of fact sheets on plants being used as trials on berms, roadways, and pipelines. Trials as well as demos are done on several locations in the B.C. Peace Region.

**Description:**

- Grows up to 3 feet (~91 cm).
- Develops a tough crown on top of the root system with many shoot buds, allowing it to re-grow many times.

**Habitat/Climate:**

- Prefers rich, well-drained, loamy soil with loose topsoil.



	Alfalfa	Points to Consider
<b>Most Common Uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hay</li> <li>• Pasture</li> <li>• Stockpiled forage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick regrowth makes several cuts a year possible</li> <li>• Quality of stockpiled forage is limited by frost</li> </ul>
<b>Optimal Grazing Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut alfalfa at 10% bloom to optimize both quality and quantity of harvested forage</li> <li>• After cutting, alfalfa can be stockpiled for fall grazing after the first killing frost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing can begin at bud stage, but there is a high risk of bloat</li> <li>• Do not graze to less than 10 cm (4 in) tall</li> <li>• Tolerance to frequent grazing is highly dependent on the variety and health of plan crowns</li> <li>• Frequent early cutting will reduce root reserves, potential for growth, and stand longevity</li> </ul>
<b>Forage Yield</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides the highest yield of all agronomic legumes</li> </ul>
<b>Competitiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not considered invasive</li> </ul>
<b>Hardiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High drought tolerance</li> <li>• Moderate winter hardiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep root system allows alfalfa to access subsoil moisture more effectively than many other types of forage</li> <li>• Can avoid the effects of drought for up to one year, and will survive longer-term drought by going dormant</li> </ul>
<b>Use in Seed Mixture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include with a grass forage such as crested wheatgrass, meadow brome grass, timothy, intermediate wheatgrass, smooth brome grass, and orchardgrass</li> </ul>
<b>Common Varieties in the Peace Region</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algonquin</li> <li>• Rambler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Anik</li> </ul>

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Peace River Forage Association  
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# Creamy Peavine

A climbing perennial legume.



## Description:

- A slender perennial legume that climbs, with the help of creeping rhizomes, to a height of approximately 3 feet (1m).
- Leaves alternate between egg-shaped and oval.
- Typical of the pea family, flowers are grouped at the tip and petals are white or yellowish-white.
- Widespread in moist to dry open woodlands, especially deciduous or mixed-tree stands.
- Seeds can be toxic to humans and livestock, especially horses, and can lead to a condition of partial paralysis called "lathyrism."

## Habitat/Climate:

- Creamy peavine is most often found in open woods, thickets, and clearings located from the plains to the foothills.
- It prefers moderate to well drained soil but is able to adjust to other conditions as well.



	Creamy Peavine	Points to Consider
<b>Most Common Uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some use in reclamation and restoration</li> </ul>
<b>Optimal Grazing Time</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low recovery as it is preferentially grazed</li> </ul>
<b>Forage Yield</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased forage production after clipping or grazing</li> <li>• Yields are lower than common agronomic legume species</li> </ul>
<b>Competitiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considered a poor competitor on disturbed sites</li> </ul>
<b>Hardiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low flood tolerance</li> <li>• Low drought tolerance</li> <li>• Medium winter hardiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grows best on well to moderately well-drained sites</li> <li>• Drought tolerance dependant on stand condition, tree canopy, and litter layer</li> </ul>
<b>Use in Seed Mixture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fall planting may assist in breaking seed dormancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site needs to be free of weeds and rhizomatous gasses to reduce competition</li> </ul>



Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

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