

# Guide to Successfully Replacing Toxic Fescue Pastures with Jesup MaxQ®, Texoma MaxQ II® and Lacefield MaxQ II® Tall Fescue - Fall Planting

The improved animal performance and economic benefits of replacing toxic tall fescue pastures with new non-toxic, novel endophyte-infected tall fescue varieties such as Pennington's Jesup MaxQ®, Texoma MaxQ II®, and Lacefield MaxQ II® are well documented. Replacing toxic fescue with these superior forages must be done properly to achieve maximum forage productivity and animal performance. This guide outlines a step-by-step process for a Fall planting conversion of toxic fescue pastures to a novel endophyte fescue variety along with first year management tips for establishment success.

## Option A: Spray-Smother-Spray-Plant

### **In Spring Prior to Fall Planting**

- Prevent toxic fescue plants from blooming by close grazing, haying or clipping.
- Remove livestock and spray a non-selective and non-residual herbicide such as Glyphosate to chemically kill existing toxic fescue prior to blooming.
- Apply fertilizer and lime as recommended by a soil test.
- Plant a summer annual forage, i.e. sorghum sudan-grass or pearl millet, to provide summer forage and to act as a smother crop for any toxic fescue seedlings that may emerge.
- Do not feed toxic fescue hay in fields to be planted.

### **In Fall Just Prior to Planting**

- Closely graze or harvest the summer annual for hay.
- Remove livestock and apply a non-selective herbicide to kill the summer annual and any emerged broadleaf weeds and grasses.
- Apply fertilizer as recommended for fescue establishment.
- Plant by no-tilling MaxQ® seed into stubble or by seeding it into a firm, tilled seedbed.
- Plant seed 1/4 to 1/2" deep. Seed planted deeper may result in poor emergence.
- Do not plant a companion/nurse crop with MaxQ®.
- Recommended seeding rate is 15-20 lbs/acre drilled or 20-25 lbs/acre broadcast.
- Planting dates: September to November 1<sup>st</sup> in southern states or August 15<sup>th</sup> to October 1st in Midwestern and Northeastern states.

## Option B: Spray-Spray-Plant

### **In Spring & Summer Prior to Fall Planting**

- Prevent toxic fescue plants from blooming by close grazing, haying or clipping.
- Apply fertilizer and lime as recommended by a soil test.
- Use pasture as normal for grazing and/or hay.
- Do not feed toxic fescue hay in fields to be planted.

### **In Late Summer Prior to Planting**

- Closely graze or harvest excess forage for hay.
- Remove livestock and apply 1.5 qts./acre Roundup WeatherMax® or glyphosate equivalent four to six weeks prior to expected planting date to kill existing weeds and grasses.

### **In Fall Just Prior to Planting**

- To kill any weed and grass escapes (even if no green leaf tissue is visible), apply an additional 1.5 qts/acre Roundup WeatherMax® or glyphosate equivalent immediately prior to or just after no-till drilling MaxQ® tall fescue.
- Apply fertilizer as recommended for fescue establishment.
- Plant by no-tilling MaxQ® seed into stubble or by seeding it into a firm, tilled seedbed.
- Plant seed 1/4 to 1/2" deep. Deeper planted seed may result in poor emergence.
- Do not plant a companion/nurse crop with MaxQ®.
- Recommended seeding rate is 15- 20 lbs/acre drilled or 20-25 lbs/acre broadcast.
- Planting dates: September to November 1<sup>st</sup> in southern states or August 15<sup>th</sup> to October 1st in Midwestern and Northeastern states.

**Special Note:** Refer to the label of the herbicide used to kill existing toxic fescue, weeds and other grasses for plant-back times for fescue. Observe all safety precautions and restrictions as described on the pesticide label.

*\*Roundup Weathermax® is a registered product of Monsanto Technology LLC.*



## First Year Management

### During Winter after Seeding

- Do not graze seedling pasture.
- Scout field for winter broadleaf weeds and if needed, apply an appropriate herbicide after fescue seedlings are fully tillered (4 leaves or more). Refer to the pesticide product label for usage rate on seedling forages.

### Spring Seedling Management

- Apply fertilizer as recommended by a soil test.
- Do not graze until forage is 8 inches tall or taller and plants are firmly anchored.
- Flash graze for short periods (2-5 days) or harvest for hay at the early boot stage.
- Do not graze or clip lower than 3".
- Do not feed toxic fescue hay on newly seeded pastures.
- To prevent hoof pugging damage, do not graze when soil is excessively wet and soft.

### Summer Management

- If weather conditions are favorable for growth, forage may be used for light rotational grazing for short periods or harvested for hay. Leave a minimum of 3 - 4" of forage growth after grazing or haying.

### General Grazing Management

- Apply fertilizer annually as recommended by a soil test. Apply nitrogen in early fall and in late winter.
- Keep forage fresh and leafy by grazing or periodic clipping.
- Rotate cattle between pastures more often during periods of heat and drought stress.
- On older stands (established 2 years or more), forage may be stockpiled during periods of rapid growth in early fall and used for winter grazing.
- Do not feed toxic fescue hay in MaxQ<sup>®</sup> pastures.



Early Fall - MaxQ<sup>®</sup>  
no-tilled into killed sod



Mid-Winter -  
seedling MaxQ<sup>®</sup> in killed sod



Early Spring - MaxQ<sup>®</sup>  
ready for limited grazing



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