

Reducing Cost of Planting Roundup Ready Alfalfa

With Roundup Ready alfalfa seed costing upwards of seven dollars per pound, maybe it's time to look for ways to reduce establishment costs. Fortunately, the seed itself can provide much of that help.

Research has shown that most growers can reduce seeding rates by fifteen to twenty percent when planting Roundup Ready alfalfa compared to historical seeding rates. That means if you normally plant fifteen pounds of seed per acre, with Roundup Ready alfalfa you probably can do as well with just twelve pounds per acre. That can lower your seed cost by more than twenty dollars per acre.

However, there is a catch. Isn't there always a catch? Fortunately, this is a pretty simple catch. You see, in order to get good stands when using lower seeding rates of Roundup Ready alfalfa, you need to do a good job of following establishment recommendations.

That means prepare a proper, firm seedbed. Apply fertilizer and lime as needed according to soil test recommendations. Use a correctly adjusted drill or seeder that will place the right amount of seed at the right depth. Plant on time. And, of course, spray Roundup before weeds and alfalfa seedlings get more than about three inches tall.

That's all there is to it. If you take care of your part of this process, then the special seed coating plus excellent weed control with no crop injury that you get with Roundup, and a little cooperation from Mother Nature, will give you good stands from less seed.

Roundup Ready alfalfa seed is expensive, but you can keep costs down by using less seed and better establishment practices.

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