

Annual ryegrass can be a good soil builder but it presents some challenges for southern farmers. It may be most useful in mixed row crop/grazing operation. Many row crop producers in the Coastal Plain strip till and the dense, fibrous roots can cause blowouts. Annual ryegrass can be very difficult to terminate and has a very narrow window when herbicides are effective. Annual ryegrass is not recommended for organic producers.

**Recommended Varieties**

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
Attain, Big Boss, Credence, Earlyploid, Jumbo, Prine, Wax Marshall, TAMTBO	Performed well on GA Statewide Variety Trials (high biomass) and are commercially available.	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data

**Planting Information**

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (inches)	0 - ½	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	10 - 20	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	20 - 30	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Aerial Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	30 - 50 Increase rates at least 30% compared to broadcast seeding.	Managing Cover Crops Profitably

**Termination Information**

Information	Source
Annual ryegrass may be terminated by herbicides, and tillage. It may be difficult to terminate, and there is some concern about it becoming a weed. Annual ryegrass has developed resistance to many herbicides. Herbicides need to be used at the proper growth stage. Best results are during early bloom, before seed set. Mechanical termination should be during early bloom, before it sets seed. Mowing will not kill ryegrass completely.  Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations. Always follow the herbicide label.	Managing Cover Crops Profitably, Prostko – personal communication

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**Cultural Traits**

Traits	Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	4,000 - 9,000	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	45 - 80	Understanding and Improving Forage Quality - UGA Bulletin 1425
Life Cycle	Cool season annual grass	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Growth Habit	Upright	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Preferred Soil pH	6.0 - 7.0	More tolerant of low pH than other cool season annual grasses.
Relative Seed Cost (\$/acre)	\$\$	Based on survey of seed costs using maximum price and max seeding rate
Min. Germination Temp (F)	40°	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Cautions	Annual ryegrass can be very difficult to terminate and has a very narrow window when herbicides are effective. This can become a persistent stand if not managed well. Early varieties have higher risk of producing viable seeds if not managed properly. Many row crop producers in the Coastal Plain strip till and the dense, fibrous roots can cause blowouts. Some farmers indicate terminating annual ryegrass at least one month before planting can help reduce blowout problems. It is not recommended for organic producers.	

**Sources:**

Managing Cover Crops Profitably: <https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books>

Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center Annual Reports: <http://swvt.uga.edu/2017/SM17/AP100-9-Rgs-forage.pdf>

Understanding and Improving Forage Quality. University of Georgia Extension Bulletin 1425: <http://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=B1425&title=Understanding%20and%20Improving%20Forage%20Quality>