

Cool season field peas are excellent N fixers with high biomass production potential. Water requirement is low. They are quick to grow in the spring, making them a good choice for rotations that include corn or sorghum as the following crop in spring. Can be mixed with grasses such as wheat or oat to provide improvement to grazing forage. Good choice for pollinator feeders in from early spring through termination. Used often in wildlife food plots. Weed control for row crops is very good.

Recommended Varieties

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
Austrian Winter Pea	More winter hardy than other cool season legumes	SARE
Wyndham Pea	Improved variety with even more winter hardiness	Texas A&M AgriLife
Caley Pea (<i>Lathyrus hirsutus</i>)	Especially adapted to high pH calcareous clays (Blackland soils).	USDA/NRCS

Planting Information

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (Inches)	0.5"-1"	Personal Communications
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	50-75 Short shelf life has been reported for pea seed. Early seeding (late Sept - mid Oct) best for biomass and N production. Use the inoculant <i>Rhizobium leguminosarum biovar viceae</i> .	SARE
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	Not recommended. Surface germination rates very low.	
Aerial Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	Not recommended	

Termination Information

Information	Source
Termination is relatively easy. Herbicides*, disking, or mowing all do the trick.	SARE
Termination after full bloom ensures best N release outcome for following crop.	
Winterkill is unlikely in Texas.	
*Always follow herbicide labels for crop to be terminated and for compatibility with subsequent crop(s). Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations.	

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Cultural Traits

Traits	Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	4,000-6,000	
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	60-150 (higher rates have been reported)	Depends on termination time. Count on lower end of range when terminating for corn planting windows. SARE
Life Cycle	Winter annual.	
Growth Habit	Semi dwarf, upright	
Preferred Soil pH	6.0-7.5	
Relative Costs	\$\$	
Min. Germination Temp	60°F	
Cautions		

Sources:

Texas A&M AgriLife:
 Personal Communications with Blackland Farmers and Seed Suppliers.

SARE:
<https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books/Managing-Cover-Crops-Profitably-3rd-Edition/Text-Version/Legume-Cover-Crops/Field-Peas>

USDA / NRCS:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_PLANTMATERIALS/publications/gapmcpu3011.pdf