

Also known as cultivated radish, radish, oilseed radish, forage radish. Radishes are commonly used in cover crop mixtures and sometimes as monocultures. If planted early, quick growth can be useful as a fall forage. In fields with high residual nitrogen and with little competition, roots can get very large. They may not reliably winterkill in the Piedmont, but should winterkill in Mountains and Ridge & Valley.

Recommended Varieties

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
'Common' VNS	Available. Produces large fleshy root.	
Defender oilseed radish	More branched root and more top growth.	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
Sod Buster	Produces large fleshy root. Claims high level of glucosinolate which can suppress nematode populations.	Petcher Seeds
Eco-till Soil Buster	Produces large fleshy root.	
Smart Radish, Nitro Radish, Graza Radish, Nematode Radish	Nitro is a standard oil seed radish, Smart has more branch roots and more top growth, Graza has less root and more forage, Nematode claims high level of glucosinolates.	Green Cover Seed

Planting Information

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (inches)	¼ - ¾ Should not be planted later than Halloween. Can plant in August.	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	8 - 13 Higher seeding rate may increase competition and decrease root size.	Managing Cover Crops Profitably, Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	8 – 20 Not recommended for overseeding in dormant pastures	Managing Cover Crops Profitably

Termination Information

Information	Source
Radishes can be terminated by heavy grazing. Brassicas can also be terminated by herbicides, mowing after flowering, and tillage. They need to be killed before full bloom to prevent seed set. Full rate of paraquat (0.75 lb ai/acre), multiple applications of glyphosate, or glyphosate plus 1 pt/acre 2,4-D may be needed to terminate.	GA and VA county agent – personal communications, Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations. Always follow the herbicide label.	

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Cultural Traits

Traits	Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	4,000 - 7,000	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	50 - 100 N is released very quickly, usually within a month and can be lost to leaching if other plants are not actively growing.	Managing Cover Crops Profitably, Radishes – A New Cover Crop for Organic Farming Systems
Life Cycle	Cool season annual broadleaf	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Growth Habit	Upright	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Preferred Soil pH	6.0 - 7.5	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Relative Seed Cost (\$/acre)	\$\$	Based on survey of seed costs using maximum price and max seeding rate
Min. Germination Temp (F)	45°	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Cautions	Neighbors may complain about the odor during decomposition. Livestock must be trained to graze brassicas.	

Forage Traits

Information	Source
Brassicas provide good quality forage during winter and early spring but should never make up more than 75 percent of cattle diet because of their low fiber content.	UGA Forages

Sources:

Gruver, J., R.R. Weil, C. White, Y. Lawley. 2017. Radishes – A New Cover Crop for Organic Farming Systems. eXtension. Organic Agriculture.

Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center Annual Reports:

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ga/plantsanimals/?cid=nrcs144p2_022076

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

USDA Oilseed Radish Plant Guide: https://plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs_rasa2.pdf