

# Scott's Seedings

By SCOTT RUSHE - SEEDWAY Forage Market Development Manager

## Spring Forages

Wow! What now? We're approaching the end of March and the thermometer has hit seventy degrees a few times and the long range forecast is for warmer than normal temperatures with no freezes in sight! New York may be a touch colder, but all in all, we are ahead of schedule and Ground Hog Phil predicted six more weeks of winter?

Speaking of **GroundHog**, radish that is, I'm starting to hear that radishes have not winter-killed. In my travels, everything that I have seen has started to winter-kill, even in southern Pennsylvania. If you planted radishes for a cover crop last year and have concerns, walk through your field and kick some radishes, if they are easy to snap at the soil surface, the decay process has started. If you can smell the odor from the radish down-wind, they have started to decay. Most fields I visited so far are slower to show signs of decay since we had a mild winter. If you still have concern before planting, I recommend taking a light disc across the field to cut the radish so that it will not re-germinate. Most people will go into corn after planting radish. Make sure you use a chemical burn-down prior to planting to clean up any plants that may have been missed.

So, we are ahead of schedule, the pastures that were sacrifice lots are now destroyed, outer pastures are already being grazed, and fields that are intended to go into corn or soybean are waiting to be planted. I am not a gambling person and tend to side on caution. Look at the calendar; just remember what a "NORMAL" planting time would be. It's always good to get things in early but sometimes that comes with a price.

I feel that this year we need to look outside the box and keep every option available. For those that need emergency forages and have ground ready, consider sowing **Partner Brand Pea/Oat Mixture** (55% pea/45% oat) straight seeded at 150#/acre or under-seeded at 100#/Acre. This combination will give you a medium-late maturity for optimum forage quality and yield. Once you have taken this combination off, consider following with **ProMax Hybrid Sudangrass**. **ProMax** is a hybrid sudangrass with the BMR trait, giving you tremendous versatility in the field. **ProMax** can be grazed after 22 inches, harvested for hay, or ensiled. With the finer stock and lower lignin than other sorghum-sudans or sudans, **ProMax** will be preferred by the animal. For hay, **ProMax** will not need to be crimped and you can expect to get at least one more cutting of **ProMax** over other sorghum sudangrasses.

If you are fortunate enough to get your row crops in early and all things go well with an earlier than normal harvest, plan to sow some **cover crops** after harvest. By adding cover crops to your rotation, you will increase soil nutrients, reduce erosion, and build organic matter. SEEDWAY will be sending out a Conservation Science Cover Crop Guide in the near future to help in the selection of the correct mixture or species to fit into your program.

Good luck with your spring plans! Please don't hesitate to contact me directly with questions on radish, emergency forages, Partner, ProMax, cover crops and help with pasture mix formulations for difficult areas, high-end horse farms and other opportunities. I can be reached at 814-280-2451 or email [srushe@seedway.com](mailto:srushe@seedway.com).

