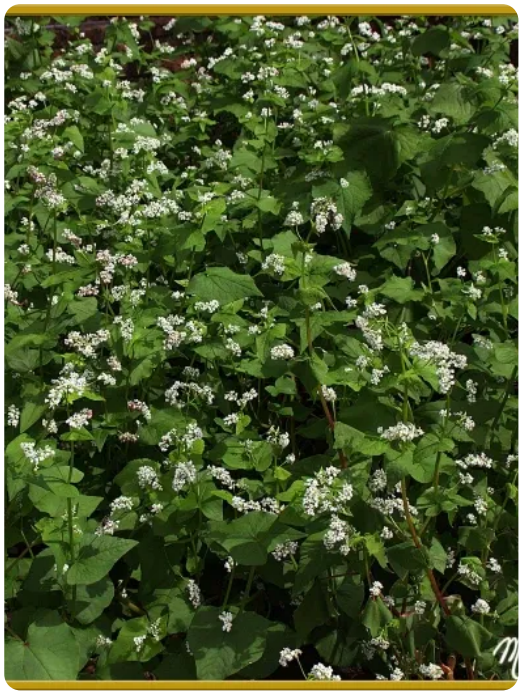
FORAGE & GRAIN CROPS

Buckwheat

Summer cover crop option

Fagopyrum esculentum

Buckwheat is not a cereal but a speedy short season summer cover crop option with a dense root system providing a good soil conditioner before the next autumn crop. Cover crops suppress weeds and attract beneficial insects and pollinators with their abundant blossoms. Good companion to add to a cover crop mix.



QUICK FACTS

TYPE & PERSISTENCY
Annual

MIN RAINFALL
550 mm+

SOWING RATE
50–50 kg/ha General

END USE
Cover crop

ABOUT THIS VARIETY

Buckwheat is a broadleaf plant and not a cereal grain, but its seeds are used for flour and many of the same uses as a cereal grain. It is considered a warm-season summer annual crop, meaning that it is typically grown in the warmest part of the year, unlike cool season crops such as oats. It is a fast-growing crop, particularly well suited to short growing seasons.

Buckwheat is a good companion in a cover crop mix because of its prolonged flowering, the fact that it grows quickly but does not crowd out other cover species, and its soil improvement properties. Buckwheat appears to be uniquely good at making phosphorus more available in the soil for the next crop. It has long been a popular plant with beekeepers due to its long flowering period of 6 to 8 weeks, and many other pollinators and beneficial insects are attracted to it.

Buckwheat performs best on neutral or slightly acidic soils and does not grow as well on alkaline soils. Fertility needs are modest; too much nitrogen can cause it to grow more rank and fall over. Buckwheat is sometimes incorrectly called a drought-tolerant crop – it readily wilts on hot dry afternoons and needs enough moisture to get established.

KEY ATTRIBUTES

- ✓ Speedy, short season summer cover crop (not a cereal)
- ✓ Smothers mid-summer weeds when sown in a dense stand
- ✓ Good companion to add to a cover crop mix
- ✓ Dense root system, a good soil conditioner
- ✓ Abundant blossoms attract beneficial insects and pollinators

PLANTING & GRAZING NOTES

For buckwheat to germinate the soil needs to be around 21˚C or above; it should not be planted in autumn as it will grow little and quickly be killed by the first light frost. A typical planting depth is about 2.5 cm – don't plant too deep. It does best in narrow rows; for cover crop use it can be broadcast and raked or harrowed in, and it is easily terminated by mowing, rolling or tilling. Have weeds under control at the time of seeding. Buckwheat grain can be fed to most livestock but should be limited to part of the ration – at 30 percent or more it can cause photosensitivity in light-skinned pigs and cattle. Buckwheat hay is deficient in protein for a cattle ration, so a supplemental protein source is needed.

STAND LIFE

Annual. Reaches maturity in about 11 to 12 weeks when planted in early summer and about 10 weeks when planted in late summer. Buckwheat does not have hard seed and normally just one flush of volunteer plants will occur.

HOW IT'S SOLD

FORM	PACK
Bare	25 kg