



Montmorency Conservation District  
13210 M-33 North (Fairgrounds)  
P.O. Box 789  
Atlanta, MI 49709  
989-785-4083  
montmorencycd.org

## **Does your wildlife food plot make you happy? By Grant Sork-NRCS**

Now is the time that you are going to see if your efforts for your wildlife food plot have paid off. If you have some problems with the establishment, here are some common mistakes made by people establishing wildlife food plots:

- More is better. Exceeding the seeding, lime, or fertilizer recommendation is a waste of both time and money, and--in the case of lime and fertilizer--too much may negatively affect the crop. The recommendations for seeding and nutrient application have been researched and should not be exceeded.
- Not fertilizing. Most crops need applications of fertilizer to help them grow and achieve maximum productivity. Don't assume your soil doesn't need fertilizer. Soil test -- don't guess.
- Using old seed. Seed that is old may not have been properly stored and handled. Make certain to use new, high quality seed in your food plot.
- Planting agricultural seeds in shaded areas. Plants grown for agricultural purposes require sunlight for energy and growth. Avoid placing these seeds in shaded areas such as woods.
- Not planting enough acres. Food plots that are too small are ineffective. Food plots can be any size, but should be at least 1,000 square feet. Food plots of 1/4 to 1/2 acre in size for every 20 acres are a good rule of thumb.
- Planting too late for maturity. All crops require a certain number of days to grow and mature. If the plants are planted too late, they will not mature and will fail to provide food to wildlife.
- Planting southern seed varieties. Because of climate differences, many seed varieties suitable for the southern United States are not well adapted to Michigan conditions. Use plants that have been proved to grow in Michigan conditions.

For more information about establishing, planting and maintaining wildlife food plots and/or soil testing please contact the Montmorency Conservation District at 785-4083.