



'Lancer'

perennial pea

Lathyrus latifolius L.



'Lancer' Perennial Pea

'Lancer' Perennial Pea was released as a cultivar by the USDA-NRCS Rose Lake Plant Materials Center (PMC) and the Michigan Department of Transportation in 1986.

Description

'Lancer' has compound leaves with two lanceolate leaflets that are 1.5 to 3.5 inches long. The long, broadly-winged stems have tendrils that give it climbing ability. The green stems and foliage form a thick vine mat that measures 2 to 3 feet in height. The plants bloom continuously for 6 weeks during the summer. The flowers range from white to deep purple and are borne on racemes of up to 10 blossoms each. The seeds are produced in pods.

Compared to other varieties of perennial pea, 'Lancer' grows more upright, has superior seedling vigor, and is a good seed producer. It also has a more uniform distribution of colors than other perennial peas evaluated.

Conservation Uses

Michigan NRCS technical specialists have determined that Lancer is useful or potentially useful with these Conservation Practice Standards:

- Conservation Cover (327)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Field Border (386)
- Forest Trails and Landings (655)
- Hedgerow Planting (422)
- Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment (654)
- Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

'Lancer' should be established as part of a seed mixture that includes perennial grasses, other legumes, or both. Other components of the mixture may be the principal soil-stabilizing plants, and 'Lancer' can be included to provide color, or it can be one of the principal cover plants. If included in the mixture to provide color only, the recommended seeding rate of 'Lancer' is 10 lbs/a PLS; otherwise it is 15 lbs/a PLS. Do not seed it alone because 'Lancer' will not provide soil cover quickly. 'Lancer' can be direct seeded with standard planting techniques. The planting site should be rolled or cultivated before and after seeding. If the site is unsuitable for equipment use, the seed can be applied with special hydro seeding equipment or broadcast and raked in the soil by hand. All plantings should be mulched with 1.5 to 2 tons/a of straw.

'Lancer' can be planted in early spring or in the fall before September 15. Fertilizer and lime should be applied according to needs determined by a soil test. The fertility requirement for 'Lancer' is similar to those for other legumes, such as alfalfa. Seed should be inoculated with the proper nitrogen-fixing bacteria just before planting.



Field of 'Lancer' Perennial Pea



Close-up Photo of 'Lancer' Perennial Pea Seed

Ecological Considerations

Toxicity has been reported when mammals have consumed large quantities of seed.



'Lancer' Perennial Pea in Bloom

Seed and Plant Production

'Lancer' perennial pea produces seed annually. Flowering starts in mid-July and can continue until frost. The long flowering period results in seeds of various maturities in the field at the same time.

Seed can be harvested with a combine. Careful timing is necessary to obtain maximum yield when harvesting seed because seed pods shatter when fully ripe. Plants should be as dry as possible when mechanically harvested. A plant desiccant may be helpful to aid plant dry down. Seed yields average 165 lbs/a.

Availability

'Lancer' perennial pea, as well as other Rose Lake PMC releases, is available from commercial suppliers. Rose Lake PMC does not sell releases to the general public, although small quantities of seed are available to commercial seed or nursery growers for increase purposes.

For more information, contact:
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Citation

Release Brochure for 'Lancer' perennial pea, (*Lathyrus latifolius*). USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Rose Lake Plant Materials Center, East Lansing, MI 48823. Published June 1984, Revised April 2014.

For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>

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