

# 'AU Sunup' Crimson Clover (*Trifolium incarnatum* L.)

A Conservation Plant Released by the USDA NRCS Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center, Americus, Georgia



'AU Sunup' Crimson Clover in Bloom

'AU Sunup' crimson clover (*Trifolium incarnatum* L.) is a cultivar released in 2009 in cooperation with Auburn University and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Stations.

## Description

'AU Sunup' is a naturalized cool season legume. It has an upright habit with pubescent stems. The leaves are trifoliate in shape. Vegetation averages up to 20 inches tall at flowering time. It produces cylindrical bloom heads with a deep red color. This cultivar is an early blooming variety of crimson clover. It can flower 5 to 21 days earlier than 'AU Robin', and 7 to 30 days earlier than 'Tibbee' depending on the year and location. Several hundred pounds of yellow seed are produced per acre in May to June and can be easily harvested with a conventional combine.

## Source

'AU Sunup' is a cultivar developed from a population of 11 crimson clover accessions collected from Alabama, Georgia, Florida and South Carolina. Plant breeding techniques produced 3 cycles of germplasm. The main selection criterion was early flowering date. The third cycle of selection became 'AU Sunup'.

## Conservation Uses

'AU Sunup' can be used as a green manure crop, cover crop for conservation tillage, habitat improver for pollinators, organic farming crop, and grazing forage. Total forage dry matter yield has ranged between 271 and 3471 pounds per acre, depending on year and location.

## Area of Adaptation and Use

'AU Sunup' was tested and is highly adapted to upland well drained soils from north Alabama to south Alabama and south Georgia. It should be generally adapted to the same sites as 'Tibbee', 'Dixie', and 'AU Robin' crimson clovers.

## Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

Seedbed preparation should begin well in advance of planting. Prior to planting, the site should be firm and have accumulated soil moisture. 'AU Sunup' can be broadcast or drilled. For maximum cool season coverage, broadcast 20 pounds of inoculated (inoculate code R) seed per acre or drill 8 to 15 pounds of inoculated seed per acre. Suggested planting dates for north Alabama and north Georgia are from September 15 –November 1, northern South Carolina, from September 1- October 15, southern Alabama and Georgia from October 1- November 15, southern South Carolina from September 15- November 15. Planting depth is approximately 1/4 inch. Apply enough lime to raise pH to 6.0. Apply fertilizer according to soil test. Systemic herbicides provide a more complete kill for conservation tillage systems than contact herbicides. A complete kill of vegetation improves conditions for planting a summer crop.

## Ecological Considerations

This cultivar does not have any particular resistance to disease or insects beyond those commonly found in the species. A mixture of tillage and herbicides can usually control any weed problem from this cultivar.



Evaluation Field of 'AU Sunup' Crimson Clover

### **Seed and Plant Production**

Harvest of 'AU Sunup' is by direct combining. In Americus, Georgia, harvest is from late April - early June. Normal yields are approximately 100 - 200 pounds of clean seed per acre.

### **Availability**

The Alabama Crop Improvement Association is increasing the cultivar. They are in the process of searching for qualified commercial seed growers to produce 'AU Sunup'.



*Seed Production Field of 'AU Sunup' Crimson Clover*

*For more information, contact:*

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