

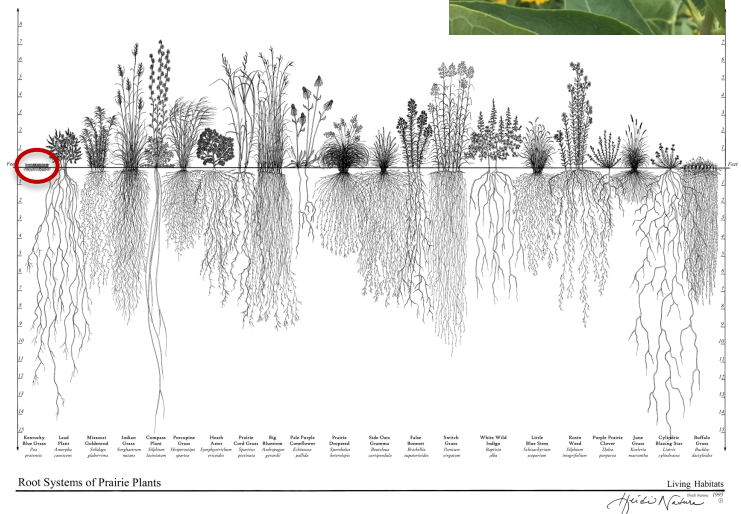
Native Seed Mix Recommendations for Buffer Strips in Agricultural Areas Lucas County, Ohio

This guidance is meant to be referenced by contractors and landowners working with the Lucas County Engineer's Office to vegetate riparian (streamside) buffer strips along waterways under county maintenance.

Planting riparian buffers with appropriate native seed (forbs and grasses) can, in many cases, provide **more benefit** to the property owner's interests and area wildlife compared to traditional turf grass and related species. See below for a summary of expected benefits of native vegetation and planting options to consider.

Benefits of Using Native Seed Mixes in Agricultural Field Buffer Strips

- Reductions in Soil Erosion
 - Many native plants have longer root systems compared to turf grasses; these longer roots help to keep soil in place during wet weather events.
 - The figure to the lower right compares root system length of Kentucky Blue Grass (traditional turf - far left) with those of some native species. *Note: Not all of the plants in this graphic are recommended for use across Ohio; this is shown for illustrative purposes only.*
- Improvement in Water Quality
 - Native plants can reduce the amount pollutants (e.g., nutrients - nitrogen and phosphorus) in surface water by filtering runoff and absorbing nutrients before they enter a waterway.
- Reductions in Long-term Maintenance of Buffer Strip
 - Little to no irrigation or fertilizer needed
 - Minimal mowing needed in an established area
- Attraction of Native Wildlife
 - Native wildlife has evolved together with native plants, so they are well-suited to provide for each other's needs (e.g., food, protection, pollination, etc.).
- Promotion of Regional Native Biodiversity
 - The absence of native vegetation cover is a major factor in the decline of many animal and insect species in Northwest Ohio.
- Beautiful Flowers
 - When designed for a specific region, quality native seed mixes contain a wide variety of flowering plants that bloom throughout the growing season.
 - Continuous and diverse blooms create a beautiful buffer area, whether it borders an active agricultural field or a residential parcel.



See back page for recommended maintenance, suggested seed mix, and area resources.

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Recommended Maintenance

- Seeding: Fall through early spring (i.e., dormant seasons)
- First Year Management: Periodic mowing and/or selective removal of targeted undesirable plants
- Long-term Management: Mow once in spring and then leave tall throughout fall, winter, and early spring
 - Native wildlife will lay eggs and/or hibernate in dormant vegetation

Suggested Seed Mix for Agricultural Field Buffer Areas

Ohio Prairie Nursery (OPN) Item #031820-1*

- Expected Height Range: 3ft to 7ft
- Suggested Seeding Rate: Hydro-seeded/Broadcast/Drilled at 10 pounds/acre
- Does well in prairie/meadow habitat with full sun

Note: OPN designed this seed mix specifically for Lucas County and the Northwest Ohio region. This mix is provided here as option/example and is available for purchase through OPN. Contractors and property

owners are encouraged to consider this mix when making their selection.

Comparable seed mixes may be available from other vendors but it is suggested that landowners consult with Lucas Soil & Water



Species Name	Common Name	%
<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	Virginia Wild Rye	25.62%
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian Grass	16.31%
<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>	Partridge Pea	15.94%
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem	12.50%
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Nodding Wild Rye	12.50%
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switch Grass	6.25%
<i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>	Indian Blanket	2.50%
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Ox Eye Sunflower	2.19%
<i>Agrostis perennans</i>	Autumn Bentgrass	1.56%
<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	Illinois Bundleflower	1.31%
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	Purple Prairie Clover	0.81%
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	0.69%
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly Weed	0.44%
<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	Cup Plant	0.37%
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild Bergamot	0.31%
<i>Vernonia altissima</i>	Tall Ironweed	0.31%
<i>Aster laevis</i>	Smooth Aster	0.31%
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	0.06%



Photo Credit: Ohio Prairie Nursery

Conservation District to evaluate mix suitability for local conditions.

Local Resources

- Lucas Soil & Water Conservation District: lucasswcd.org
- Ohio Prairie Nursery: opnseed.com
- Greater Toledo Lake Erie Clear Choices Clean Water: toledolakeerie.clearchoicescleanwater.org