

or moss and wrapped in nursery paper. It is best not to stack the bundles on top of each other because they will heat up and the basal portion of the plant will dry out. If planting cannot be completed within a few days, the beachgrass can be healed in by placing it in a trench dug in the sand; covering and watering the beachgrass well.

Q: *Is the beachgrass sold only in the spring?*

A: No. Beachgrass is sold through the district in late April and May, and then again in September and October.

Q: *Are the plants always green?*

A: No. Plants usually start to green up late in the spring and become dormant and brown in color by late fall. Beachgrass purchased in April will still be brown.

Q: *Will you ship the beachgrass?*

A: Yes. The beachgrass can be shipped through United Parcel Service. It takes 1-3 days for it to arrive. We cannot ship more than 10,000 plants.

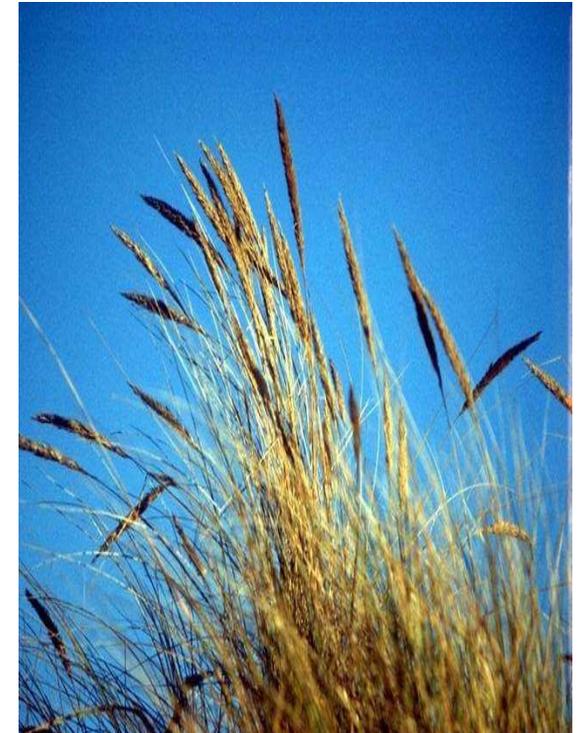
**FOR MORE INFORMATION
OR TO ORDER
AMERICAN
BEACHGRASS
PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Mason-Lake Conservation District
655 N. Scottville Rd.
Scottville, MI 49454
Phone: 231-757-3707, ext. 5
Fax: (855) 813-7695
www.mason-lakeconservation.org**

All Conservation District programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status, handicap height, or weight.

**Mason-Lake Conservation District
655 N Scottville Rd.
Scottville, MI 49454**

American Beachgrass (Marram Grass)



Ammophila breviligulata

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AMERICAN BEACHGRASS is native to the Atlantic Coast and the Great Lakes. It is more strongly rhizomatous, less sensitive to high temperatures and somewhat longer-lived than European beachgrass. American beachgrass is a tough, coarse, erect perennial with hard, scaly, creeping rhizomes and dense, spike-like seedheads. Seed is generally infertile.

American beachgrass has proved to be the best plant for initial stabilization of moving sand. Stems from the plant form a mechanical barrier, which slows and then traps moving sand.

SUITABILITY: Most eroding sandy areas and shifting sand dunes can be planted. Slopes steeper than 2 to 1 should not be planted until the slopes are shaped flatter than 2 to 1.

PLANTING: American beachgrass plantings are established vegetatively. When planting will extend over a period of several seasons, it is usually best to start on the side from which the sand and wind comes (windward). On extensive areas, on-site assistance should be obtained from your local Conservation District to determine the best system of planting to use.

Enough moisture should be present so when an opening is made with a spade, the sand will not run back into the hole. If there is too much dry sand on the surface, scrape it away before the planting slot is opened. A narrow tile spade or planting bar may be used for hand planting. There have been mixed results in using a machine tree planter on large areas. When planting, protect the culms from wind and sun so they do not dry out.

A planting depth of 6 to 10 inches is suggested so that the buds at the base of the stem do not dry out nor will plants blow out in a heavy wind. When planting by hand, firm the soil around the plants with your heel.

Place 1-3 stems or culms into each hole. On severe sites where quick over is needed,

space culms about 18 x 18 inches. A minimum of 20,000 culms per acre are needed for this solid planting, more if placing more than one culm per hole.

A spacing of 24 x 24 inches may be used in areas not directly exposed to strong winds. About 11,000 culms per acre are required on these sites. On large sand blows, scattered or "skeleton" planting reduces the cost, but requires more time for complete control. On the average, about 2,500 culms per acre are needed. Plant first on the windward side, using a close spacing in a band 2 to 3 rows wide. Space the plants 18 x 18 inches in the rows.

The key to successful planting is planting when soil conditions are their best, usually early in the spring or fall when the weather is cool and soil moisture is present.

FERTILIZING: Fertilization is very important to successful establishment of beachgrass. In the absence of a soil test, about 25 pounds of 12-0-12 fertilizers per 1,000 culms is suggested. This is equivalent to 500 pounds per acre at the 20,000 culms planting rate. Fertilizer should be broadcast on the soil surface after planting. Most eroding sand sites are very infertile. Fertilizer will allow the new beachgrass plants to thrive. Note: Use phosphorus free fertilizer where available.

SITE MANAGEMENT: A year or two after planting beachgrass, when all surface sand movement has ceased, adapted trees or grasses such as tall or red fescue may be planted right in the beachgrass. In the few instances where fertility level is so high that beachgrass would shade out seedlings, this follow-up planting should be deferred until plants weaken enough to allow light to reach the ground surface.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BEACHGRASS

Q: How does the beachgrass grow?

A: The district's beachgrass is native stock and is inspected annually by the Michigan

Department of Agriculture Pesticide & Plant Division. It grows in bunches containing many culms (stems) that may reach a height of two to three feet. The plants spread by underground rhizomes (stems). Many new culms appear from beneath the sand in early spring. A planting done at the 18" x 18" spacing will often fill in completely with beachgrass within 3 years.

Q: Can the seed be planted?

A: Beachgrass produces seed in a spike-like panicle (cluster) about 10 inches long, usually visible in late July or August. We do not recommend, however, using the seed, because when seeds are shed in the fall they dry out easily or are sandblasted, buried, or blown away. Planting culms gives the best results for stabilization.

Q: How do you count the culms when planting?

A: Planting 1-3 stems per hole is recommended. One stem with three leaves is one plant or a culm. Sometimes, the culms will come clumped with several others. These can be broken down into 1-3 culms so that the plants will cover a bigger area.

Q: If a root is not present, does this mean that the plant will not grow?

A: Roots usually are not evident, but will develop from basal nodes after planting. Each culm, therefore, must have at the base, nodes from which the roots and buds grow.

Q: How do I care for the beachgrass after I pick it up from the district?

A: Culms should be kept cool and moist and planted as soon as possible. The basal portion, where new growth appears, must be protected from drying out. When you purchase your plants from the district, they are hand packaged in bundles of approximately 500 plants or culms. The basal portion is covered with wet paper