

DO's & DON'Ts

DO

- Use only highest quality seed.
- Plant on well-drained sites.
- Use only crownvetch-specific inoculant.
- Always keep inoculant at room temperature or below.
- Apply limestone if needed.
- Use mulch after seeding.
- (Hydroseeders) Add inoculant last and seed immediately.

DON'T

- Accept low quality seed.
- Plant in shaded area.
- Plant on poorly drained soils.
- Plant in soil below pH 6.0 without adding lime.
- Store inoculant above room temperature.
- Use more than the recommended seeding rate of companion grass.
- Use high nitrogen fertilizers.
- Add topsoil.
- Plant near gardens — it's too competitive.
- (Hydroseeders) Delay seeding after inoculant is in tank.

DO have patience — crownvetch is slow to develop.

Brief History

On a June day in 1935, when Fred Grau was driving to Reading, Pennsylvania, he stumbled onto a cinder shale pile with beautiful pink and lavender flowers. He had never seen this plant before. Grau stopped and took some of it back with him to what was then The Pennsylvania State College, where he was an extension agronomist, and began studying it. The plant was identified as crownvetch, a perennial legume.

At Dr. Grau's urging, the Pennsylvania Department of Highways and the Pennsylvania State College (now Penn State University) tried test plantings of crownvetch. They found it to be superior in retaining moisture and controlling erosion on slopes. In 1954, the Penngift name was assigned to this variety, and in 1961, the first officially certified seed of Penngift crownvetch was produced.

Today, many decades after these tests, Penngift crownvetch is in broad use in America and around the world. Its beauty and utility are seen on cuts and fills on highways as well as on industrial sites, parks, golf courses, college campuses, strip mines and homesites. In 1985, Dr. Grau said, "The original plants I found in 1935 are still on the hills and have been thriving with no maintenance for the past 50 years."

Dr. Grau passed away in 1990, at the age of 88, leaving Penngift crownvetch and his company, Grasslyn, Inc., as a living legacy to its founder. His son, Fred Jr., now runs the company which continues to be dedicated to producing Penngift crownvetch seed of the highest quality.

Grasslyn's Penngift Crownvetch

A TRUE PERENNIAL WITH BEAUTIFUL
SUMMER BLOOMS

- No maintenance
- Stops erosion
- Heat, cold and drought resistant
- Chokes out weeds
- Disease and insect resistant
- Builds soil by adding nitrogen
- Superior game cover
- Excellent ruminant foliage



DISTRIBUTED BY:

Grasslyn's Penngift Crownvetch



Grasslyn, Inc.
Founders of
the Crownvetch Industry

Description

Penngift crownvetch (*Coronilla varia*, var. Penngift) is a deep-rooted perennial legume that reproduces by both seed and rhizomes (creeping underground stems). Above ground, the multi-branched stems with fern-like leaves can grow up to a height of two feet, forming a thick, billowy cover which provides unexcelled protection for the soil below.

Below ground, Penngift crownvetch has an extensive branching root system that penetrates to two feet or more and produces several beneficial results. This massive root system contributes to the soil-holding nature of the plant and also greatly improves the soil structure (tilth). In addition, its creeping habit allows the plant to fill in any bare areas that did not "take" after seeding.

Being a legume, the beneficial bacteria associated with the roots convert nitrogen into forms readily utilized by plants. In many ways, the underground activity of this remarkable plant is as important as that of the more showy above-ground portion.

Penngift crownvetch flowers from late spring until the first frost, with a two to three week period of intense blooming of pink or lavender flowers in late spring or early summer (see cover photo). At other times during the growing season, Penngift crownvetch exhibits a rich, dark green effect with a sprinkling of blooms.

Penngift crownvetch develops slowly and takes two to three years to reach maturity. During the first months of development, the seedlings can easily be confused with the common clovers.

Adaptation

Penngift crownvetch is naturally well adapted within the area bounded by southeastern Canada down to northern Georgia, across to east Texas and up through eastern Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas. The limiting factor west of the Missouri River is moisture availability. However, with irrigation, the plant thrives even in the hot, arid West.

Penngift crownvetch does well in a variety of soils and conditions, although, like all plants, there are limits. It should be considered a "full sun" plant which does not do well in shade. The plant will not grow in wet or poorly drained soils. Also, performance drops off significantly in sandy soils.

Soil pH is very important, with a pH of 6.5 or above being ideal. In acid soils below 6.0, Penngift crownvetch will not do well without supplemental limestone.

***** for over 60 years*****

*Penngift Crownvetch
has proven to be
superior ground cover for
hillsides and reclamation areas*



The crownvetch on the left never needs mowing.

Uses

- highway slopes
- strip mines
- game lands
- utility rights-of-way
- pasture for ruminants
- industrial sites
- schools
- homesites
- anyplace where mowing is impractical or dangerous

*Grasslyn's
Penngift Crownvetch*

Planting Instructions

CONVENTIONAL PLANTING

PLANTING TIME

Anytime of the year, except the 8-week "window" before the first killing frost in autumn. Also, midsummer seedings will usually be slower to develop.

SEEDBED

If surface seeding, leave it rough and cloddy. Do not add topsoil. Light raking after seeding is optional. Be sure to follow mulching instructions below.

If there is existing vegetation, cut prior to seeding to provide mulch and reduce competition. Later, weeds can be clipped above the height of the crownvetch. Herbicides can be used, but consult with local professionals.

If using a drill, plant 1/4 inch deep. Soil should be firmly pressed about the seed.

LIME

Soil pH level should be 6.5 or above. In the absence of a soil test, apply two tons of ground limestone/acre (100 lbs./1,000 sq. ft.)

FERTILIZER

Per soil test recommendations. If no soil test, apply a low nitrogen fertilizer such as 5-10-10 at 800 lbs./acre (18 lbs./1,000 sq. ft.)

INOCULATION

Slightly dampen seed, then thoroughly mix in crownvetch-specific inoculant so that some inoculant has adhered to all seeds. **IMPORTANT:** Always keep inoculant at room temperature or below prior to seeding. Excessive heat destroys the beneficial bacteria.

SEED

Plant 20 lbs./acre (1 lb./1,000 sq. ft.). Use only high quality Penngift crownvetch seed, with a minimum purity of 98%, noxious weed-free and a minimum "total" germination of 80% (quick germination plus hard seed).

COMPANION GRASS

Seed 25 lbs./acre (1 lb./1,000 sq. ft.) of either ryegrass or fescue along with the Penngift crownvetch to provide a quick, temporary cover the first year.

MULCH

A **MUST** for surface seeding. After seeding, apply approximately two tons/acre of straw or clean hay. On smaller areas, apply a sufficient amount to provide good protection without smothering the soon-to-develop seedlings.

HYDROSEEDING

STEP 1

To water in the tank, add limestone, fertilizer and seed equivalent to the amounts shown above under Conventional Planting, plus 200 lbs./acre of cellulose pulp. **IMMEDIATELY** prior to application, add crownvetch inoculant at 4 times the normal rate. Prolonged exposure of the inoculant to the fertilizer solution can kill it and result in failure.

STEP 2

IMMEDIATELY following Step 1, apply 1,200 lbs./acre of cellulose pulp, or 2 tons/acre of clean straw or hay to protect the inoculant on the exposed soil surface.