

# Imperial Whitetail **Extreme** ■■■



## Going Where No Perennial Has Gone Before

By Jon Cooner

**P**erhaps the most fertile source of the Whitetail Institute's new product ideas is its system of field testers. When our field testers asked for a perennial food plot blend that would thrive in harsh conditions, the Institute, as always, was listening. The result was Imperial Whitetail Extreme. It truly goes where no other high-quality food plot perennial has gone before.



If we all had our way, we would all have rich, fertile soil in which to plant our food plots. We'd also receive at least thirty inches of rainfall per year — every year. Many field testers east of the Mississippi River do have the luxury of planting in such ideal conditions.

But what if you're in the mountainous West, for example, and receive only 15 inches of rainfall per year? Or, what if you're in Texas and, in addition to low rainfall, your region suffers from sustained summer temperatures over 100 degrees? What if you are in an area of Canada or the Great Plains where the climate can be exceptionally cold and where soils are sometimes too fluffy to hold lime or soil pH well? And, what if you only have old strip-mine ground? If you're in such a situation and have thought it impossible to grow a high-quality perennial forage for deer, Extreme is the answer.

**Extreme Tolerance of Low Rainfall:** Extreme is exceptionally tolerant of low rainfall. Most perennial food plot blends require at least thirty inches of

rainfall every year to survive. Extreme will tolerate rainfall levels as little as half that — only 15 inches per year. And it can stay green longer than other perennials, even during severe droughts.

The past two summers here in Central Alabama have been the worst anyone at the Institute can remember. In fact, I remember having left the office one afternoon in late summer last year and noticing an unusual, but somehow familiar, smell in the air as I walked through the parking lot. It took me a few moments to realize that what I smelled was the scent of wet asphalt. I had not realized that it had showered while I was in the office, and the surface moisture had evaporated from the surface of the parking lot by the time I left work. It had been so long since I'd experienced the scent of wet asphalt that it took a few seconds for it to register. That's how long it had been since it had rained.

Amazingly, our Extreme plots here in Alabama made it through the extraordinarily hot, dry conditions of the last two summers. And they didn't just survive — they actually stayed above ground and green, even though many of our test-forage plots did not.

The primary component of Extreme is the Institute's Persist™ forb, a very durable, evergreen forage plant whose tap root can reach down as far as two to three feet for moisture. Extreme also includes hardy clover varieties and the Institute's WINA-100 perennial forage chicory, a highly drought-resistant chicory variety specifically chosen for its attractiveness to deer.

**Extreme Tolerance of Low Soil pH:** Another feature that contributes to Extreme's success is its ability to grow in lighter soils that may be too fluffy or sandy to hold lime and soil pH well. Extreme will tolerate soil pH as low as 5.4, a level unheard-of before Extreme was introduced.

Aside from sunlight and water, soil pH is the single most important factor you can control to assure success from any forage planting. Most forages traditionally planted for deer require a soil pH of 6.5 or higher for optimum growth. Unfortunately for some planters, soil type can be a limiting factor to pH adjustment. Some soils can be too fluffy, sandy or otherwise light to hold lime well enough to allow it to raise soil pH to 6.5 or higher. In such cases, forages that require higher pH can suffer. Extreme will also perform well in soils that hold pH well, but its most valuable feature for areas with lighter soils is its ability to tolerate soil pH as low as 5.4, a level that simply will not sustain many other types of perennial forage plants.

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## If the conditions on your property are extreme, then what you consider planting should be as well.

Extreme conditions call for extreme measures. And Imperial Whitetail Extreme is powerful enough to overcome the worst your property has to offer. Thanks to Extreme, dry, hot locations and soil with low pH no longer prohibit growing a successful perennial crop. Extreme requires only 15 inches of rainfall a year, is both heat and cold tolerant, and will grow well in pH levels as low as 5.4. Extreme is ideal for challenging growing conditions, but will also do great when conditions are kinder. An extreme response to extreme conditions.

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Research = Results.

**Extreme Nutrition:** Extreme is a high-quality, protein-rich food source that provides necessary nutrition to deer on a year-round basis. With protein levels up to 30 percent, Extreme provides deer with the protein they need for rack production, doe lactation, fawn growth and overall herd health.

**Extreme Attraction:** Let's face it, though — in the final analysis, even a highly nutritious forage that will withstand harsh growing conditions is worthless unless it is highly attractive to deer. Extreme passes this test too — with flying colors. And like other Imperial blends, turkeys and other wildlife also find Extreme irresistible.

During testing, even we were surprised at how incredibly attractive Extreme is to deer. In fact, our research showed that Extreme's attractiveness even rivals that of the number-one food plot product in the world, Imperial Whitetail Clover.

The biggest obstacle the Whitetail Institute has had to overcome with Extreme is in educating field testers on Extreme's fertilizer requirements, which differ from the fertilizer requirements for Imperial Whitetail Clover, Chicory Plus and Alfa-Rack Plus. The biggest difference is in the amount of nitrogen fertilizer that should be used at planting, and also later when the forage is being maintained.

Blended fertilizers have three numbers separated by dashes on the front of the bags. The first number represents the percentage of nitrogen in the fertilizer blend. Nitrogen is directly related to forage growth. Imperial Whitetail Clover, Chicory Plus, Alfa Rack Plus and Double-Cross are "nitrogen-fixing" blends, which means that once they are growing, they make enough nitrogen for their own needs. That's why, absent a soil test, we recommend that these blends be fertilized

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with a comparatively low-nitrogen fertilizer such as 6-24-24 at planting, and the lowest nitrogen fertilizer blend available, preferably a zero-nitrogen blend such as 0-20-20, later when the forage is being maintained.

Extreme, however, is not a nitrogen-fixing blend. That means that higher nitrogen fertilizers should be used, both at planting and later when the forage is being maintained. That's why, absent a soil test, we recommend that Extreme be fertilized at planting, and in later years when the forage is being maintained, with 400 pounds per acre of a higher nitrogen blended fertilizer such as 13-13-13 or 17-17-17. Also, unlike phosphorous and potassium, which are represented by the second and third numbers on blended fertilizer bags, nitrogen doesn't last long once it is exposed to the environment, which is why you should fertilize Extreme again with 100 pounds per acre of a high-nitrogen fertilizer such as 33-0-0 a month or so after planting to further boost forage growth.

The foregoing are general recommendations for folks who cannot obtain a soil test before preparing their seedbeds. When possible, the best course is always to obtain a proper soil analysis before planting

any crop, and then follow the recommendations on the soil test report. A proper soil test will tell you whether or not you really do need to add lime and nutrients to the soil before planting, and if so, exactly how much of each you need to add to get the best production from your forage crop. Be sure to use a proper soil test kit — one that actually sends soil off to a lab. High quality soil-test kits are available from the Whitetail Institute, County Agents, agricultural universities and most farm-supply stores. And be sure to note on the sample bag what crop you will be planting so that the lab can precisely tailor its recommendations for that crop. Whitetail Institute soil-test kits come with an instruction sheet that allows you to just check a block beside the Imperial blend you will be planting.

Extreme is a proven winner. Just ask our Field Testers planting in the lower-rainfall areas of Texas or Idaho, the sandier soils of Central Florida, the lighter soils of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, or in strip-mine ground in Pennsylvania. But these aren't the only Institute customers who are enjoying the spectacular benefits Extreme offers. Although Extreme is designed to tolerate poor conditions, it will also thrive in good growing conditions, even with rainfall levels up to sixty inches per year, as long as it's planted in soils that drain well. In fact, many of our customers do plant Extreme even though they are not facing rough growing conditions. Because the perennials in Extreme are different from those in our other perennial blends, Extreme can add variety to other Imperial perennials in an overall food-plot system. And like Imperial Clover, Chicory Plus, Chic Magnet, Alfa-Rack Plus and Double-Cross, Extreme can last up to five years without replanting, providing vital protein to whitetails year after year.

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- Imperial DOUBLE-CROSS™ — 1/2 acre planting (4 lbs.)

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