



Alfa-Rack Plus

“Research = Results” In Action

By Institute Staff

“Research = Results.” There is a fundamental reason why Whitetail Institute products continue to lead the industry, and their motto says it all. The Institute is committed to exhaustive research and development, not only of new products but also existing products such as Alfa-Rack Plus.

When it comes to the long-term success of Whitetail Institute forages, Alfa-Rack Plus is among those at the top of the list. One of the reasons for its enduring performance is the diversity of the forage plants that make up the blend. These include WINA-100 brand perennial forage chicory and X-9 technology grazing alfalfas. Any examination of Alfa-Rack Plus, though, must include the third perennial group in the blend—Imperial Whitetail Clover.

Upgraded Clover Varieties: Alfa-Rack Plus contains the very same perennial clovers that are the backbone of the number-one food-plot product in the world, Imperial Whitetail Clover. The first clover ever developed specifically for deer is Advantage. Developed by the Institute’s former Director of Plant Breeding, Dr. Wiley Johnson, Advantage served as the main perennial component in Imperial Clover. Several years ago, Dr. Johnson completed his development of the Institute’s second proprietary clover, Insight. The new Insight clover is drought- and heat-tolerant and, of course, highly nutritious and attractive to deer. When Insight was combined with Advantage in the Imperial Clover blend, it also became a component of Alfa-Rack Plus. These clovers are available only in Whitetail Institute products.



Even with the huge success of Alfa-Rack, the Institute continually looks for ways to enhance existing products, and Alfa-Rack was no exception. In addition to adding Insight clover to the existing blend, certain goals were set for improving the alfalfa component as well. These included improving ease of establishment, forage longevity, drought resistance, and even greater attraction,

New X-9 Technology Grazing Alfalfas: Alfalfa is well known for its attractiveness to deer. Hay-type alfalfas are at their most attractive when young, or just after mowing, when new growth appears. As they mature, though, they become stemmier, and therefore less attractive and palatable to deer. That's why the Institute included grazing-alfalfa varieties instead of hay varieties in Alfa-Rack, the original form of what is now Alfa-Rack Plus.

The original grazing alfalfas in Alfa-Rack were easier to establish than standard, hay-type alfalfas. And because they were designed for grazing instead of hay production, they were more palatable and attractive to whitetails. They also exhibited a good level of drought tolerance common to most alfalfa varieties.

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Testing candidates for the new alfalfa component of

Alfa-Rack Plus involved two stages. First, specific varieties were identified as exhibiting one or more of the target goals. Second, these specific varieties were tested in varying ratios to one another until a specific blend of new, X-9 technology grazing alfalfas was identified that exhibited the targeted traits.

X-9 Alfalfa Technology makes Alfa-Rack Plus easier and faster to establish than traditional alfalfa varieties. Other improvements included faster re-growth after grazing, higher total yield, improved disease resistance and extended longevity. These improvements actually were not that surprising, since these alfalfas were specifically bred to exhibit these characteristics.

X-9 alfalfas are highly drought resistant, often putting down roots that can extend several feet down into the soil in search of water. Alfa-Rack Plus is also extremely heat- and cold-tolerant and, like other Imperial perennials, blended for specific regions.

WINA-100 Brand Perennial Forage Chicory: This is the third perennial component of Alfa-Rack Plus. When it comes to chicory, WINA-100 is a vastly superior variety for deer. Other chicories sometimes planted for deer tend to lose palatability rather quickly as they become stemmy and their leaves take on a waxy, leath-

ery texture as they mature. This does not happen with WINA-100 perennial forage chicory, which produces foliage that is vastly more palatable to deer. WINA-100 chicory can also grow root systems several feet deep, which improves the drought resistance of the blend even further.

Alfa-Rack Plus is designed to be planted in areas that receive at least 30 inches per year in rainfall, and in good soils that are moderately to well drained. As with all alfalfas and alfalfa products, soil pH is especially critical. Alfa-Rack Plus should be planted in soils with a pH of 6.5 or higher.

Like other Imperial blends, Alfa-Rack Plus is available in multiple pre-packaged quantities. The 20-pound bag of Alfa-Rack Plus will plant 1.5 acres, and the 3.75-pound bag plant 1/4 acre.

For more information about Alfa-Rack Plus, just go to www.whitetailinstitute.com and click on the "Products" link. Also our in-house consultants are available to answer questions or take your order from 8:00-5:00, Central Time, Monday through Friday, at (800) 588-3030, ext. 2.

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