

## Aeschynomene Seed

Aeschynomene Food Plot Seed (*Aeschynomene Americana*), also known as common aeschynomene, joint vetch or deer vetch, is a warm-season annual legume adapted to moist sites throughout the southeastern U.S., but it is mainly grown for seed production in South Florida. Common Aeschynomene, is a true annual legume that flowers and produces seed in the early fall. Plants usually die after seed has matured, but the stand can be managed to re-seed and maintain itself in good production for several years after first establishment. Common aeschynomene has a high nutritive value and is very palatable to cattle and deer. It has been used in the cattle industry and for wildlife plantings for many years. Through our many years of planting wildlife food plots for deer we feel that Aeschynomene is the absolute best ingredient for a spring, summer and fall food plot application in the southeastern climates.

### Site Selection

Aeschynomene grows best on moist, fertile soils. It is more tolerant of extremely wet conditions than of drought. Surface drainage is needed especially during establishment. Although well-established plants can withstand short periods of flooding, young plants (seedlings) can be injured or killed if plants are completely submerged in water. In general, aeschynomene is adapted to the moist flatwood areas throughout the southeast.

### Order "Aeschynomene" Food Plot Seed

For orders over 250 lbs. please use our eQuote system for DISCOUNTS!

### Seeding Timeframe

Seeding date can be critical to successful establishment. Aeschynomene is usually planted in June when the summer rains start. It has been planted successfully in April and May when spring rainfall has been above normal. Try to plant to establish new stands or lightly disk old stands to encourage seed germination when the chances are greatest for continued good soil moisture. Stand failure of aeschynomene is mainly caused by inadequate soil moisture at or shortly after seeding.

The greatest chance for successful establishment occurs when plantings are made in June after a spring when rainfall has been greater than normal and the soil profile is saturated. When planting after June 1, use seed with the hull removed, which may have an immediate germination as high as 90 to 95%. Use 10-15 lbs per acre on a clean-tilled seedbed and 8-15 lbs/A on sod. A 50/50 mixture of seed with Alyce Clover or Carpon Desmodium can be used at all times of planting to provide security against establishment failures due to drought or short periods of excessive moisture.

### Inoculation

Inoculate seed with the proper bacteria (cowpea group) when aeschynomene is seeded into new land or into fields where a summer legume has never been grown. Inoculation of the seed is not required if aeschynomene or some other summer legume that requires the cowpea inoculant has been grown in the area to be planted.

## Grazing Management

Rotational grazing is recommended when plants reach a height of 18 inches. A stocking rate of 2 to 5 animal units per acre has been suggested. Graze the plants back to about 8 to 14 inches and move to the next pasture. Maintaining a 14-inch stubble will allow for maximum regrowth and good seed production.

Aeschynomene provides much needed protein in July, August and September when perennial grasses are usually deficient in protein. Protein in leaves and young stems of aeschynomene will exceed 20%. Nursing calves that have common aeschynomene available will gain an extra 30 to 50 lbs compared to calves that have only perennial grass.

## Harvested Forage

Aeschynomene is best suited for grazing in a mixture with grass. Although some hay and silage have been made, neither process works very well. The plants are high in moisture and mucilaginous (sticky) which causes problems in handling fresh material. When dried, the leaves and small stems become very brittle, causing high losses in hay making.

Courtesy of <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>.