



**COOL SEASON VS WARM SEASON  
ORNAMENTAL AND NATIVE  
GRASSES**



MOTHER NATURE  
AND DORMANCY

Does this sound familiar?

The end of the season is coming up. You have a large landscape job with multiple ornamental grass species. Then we advise you to wait to plant some of those grasses until spring or suggest several steps to take to ensure those grasses survive the winter.

Or it has been a cool spring, and your customers (there is always one) are **POSITIVE** some established grasses in their landscape have died.

**WHY????**



## MOTHER NATURE AND DORMANCY

The answer lies in the process that Mother Nature has in place to bring plants into dormancy for the winter and bring them out of dormancy in the spring.

In the fall the soil starts to cool as early as mid-September. Once it cools to below the 60-degree mark, there are certain grasses that do not appreciate cool fall temperatures and stop growing and putting down roots.

In spring the soil has not warmed to that 60-degree mark, so certain grasses are too smart to make an appearance yet.

We separate Ornamental and Native Grasses into two general types, Cool Season and Warm Season.





## COOL SEASON GRASSES

Cool Season grasses grow best in mild weather conditions, such as those in spring and fall.

Plant them when the air temperature is a balmy 60 to 70 degrees, or from April to June and late August to October.

Even though they do not die during those hot summer months, they do slow down.

If they are a genera that produces blooms, they have probably bloomed or are in bloom as the temps heat up.



Bromus Calamagrostis Deschampsia Elymus Festuca Helictotrichon Hierochloe Hystrich Koeleria Sesleria Carex

LIST OF COOL SEASON GRASS GENERA







## WARM SEASON GRASSES

Warm Season Grasses **love** hot weather and warm garden soil. They grow best when the air temperature is between 80 and 95 degrees and the soil has warmed to at least 65 degrees. They start to break dormancy around mid to late May. We call them “smart plants” as they do not emerge until the danger of frost has all but passed.

An established warm season grass must grow rapidly from June to August to achieve the height some of the do.

That little fact is the reason it is not advisable to plant warm season grasses once the soil has cooled. Root growth stops when the soil gets even a little chilly.

Add to that the fact that several of the most beloved warm season grasses are on the edge of their hardiness zone and you can see why we urge you to take extra good care of them if you must plant them late in the season.



Ammophila Andropogon Bouteloua Chasmanthium Eragrostis Hakonechloa\* Miscanthus

## LIST OF WARM SEASON GRASS SPECIES (PART 1)





Molinia Panicum Pennisetum\* Saccharum\* Schizachyrium Sorghastrum Spartina Sporobolus

## LIST OF WARM SEASON GRASS GENERA (PART 2)





There are so many gorgeous varieties of ornamental grasses that add color, texture and movement to any landscape or garden. It is worth it to get the timing right for landscape success.

THANK YOU

Questions? Comments?  
Please contact us!  
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