

Agrostis flaccida



Tickling the Grass: Propagating the Delicate Bentgrass (Agrostis flaccida)

Agrostis flaccida, more commonly known as delicate bentgrass, is a graceful, fine-textured grass native to western North America. Its natural habitat sprawls from Alaska down to California, thriving in meadows, open woods, and coastal bluffs. This delicate beauty is becoming increasingly popular in gardens for its airy elegance and ability to thrive in a variety of conditions.

If you're looking to invite the delicate charm of *Agrostis flaccida* to your own garden, propagation is key. Fortunately, this hardy grass offers two main methods for increasing your supply:

1. Seed Propagation:

Sowing seeds is the most common way to propagate *Agrostis flaccida*. Here's a step-by-step guide:

- **Timing is Crucial:** For best results, sow your seeds in either early spring or late summer when the soil temperature is consistently above 60°F.
- **Prepare Your Seedbed:** Choose a location with well-drained soil and full sun to partial shade. Lightly amend the soil with compost for improved drainage and nutrient content.
- **Sowing the Seed:** Sprinkle your seeds evenly over the prepared surface, ensuring they are scattered thinly. *Agrostis flaccida* seeds are incredibly fine, almost dust-like, so sowing with a seed dispenser can be helpful.
- **Light Covering:** Lightly press the seeds into the soil surface, ensuring they are covered with a thin layer of soil, about 1/8 inch deep.
- **Water Gently:** Using a fine mist setting, water the area thoroughly. Maintain consistent moisture throughout germination but avoid overwatering, which can cause the tiny seeds to rot.
- **Patience is Key:** Germination typically takes 7 to 21 days, depending on temperature and moisture levels.
- **Thinning Out:** As the seedlings emerge and mature, thin them out to allow 6-12 inches of space between each plant. This helps ensure good air circulation and prevents overcrowding.

2. Division:

For established clumps of *Agrostis flaccida*, division is another effective propagation method, especially during early spring or fall.

- **Divide and Conquer:** Gently dig up a healthy clump of grass, ensuring you have a good root mass. Using a sharp knife or garden spade, carefully divide the clump into smaller sections.
- **Replant Immediately:** Replant the divisions immediately in prepared soil, similar to the conditions recommended

for seed starting.

- **Water Thoroughly:** After planting, ensure the divisions are well-watered to encourage root establishment.

Caring for your new *Agrostis flaccida*:

Whether you've propagated through seed or division, providing proper care is essential for healthy growth.

- **Watering:** While established *Agrostis flaccida* is relatively drought tolerant, consistent moisture is crucial during establishment. Aim for deep, infrequent watering that encourages deep root growth.
- **Fertilization:** This grass is not a heavy feeder. However, a light application of balanced fertilizer in early spring can help promote healthy growth.
- **Mowing:** While not essential, you can mow occasionally to maintain a specific height. However, maintain a higher mowing height, leaving at least 2 inches of growth, to avoid stressing the plant.

With proper propagation and care, the delicate beauty of *Agrostis flaccida* can grace your garden for years to come, swaying gently in the breeze and adding a touch of natural elegance to your landscape.