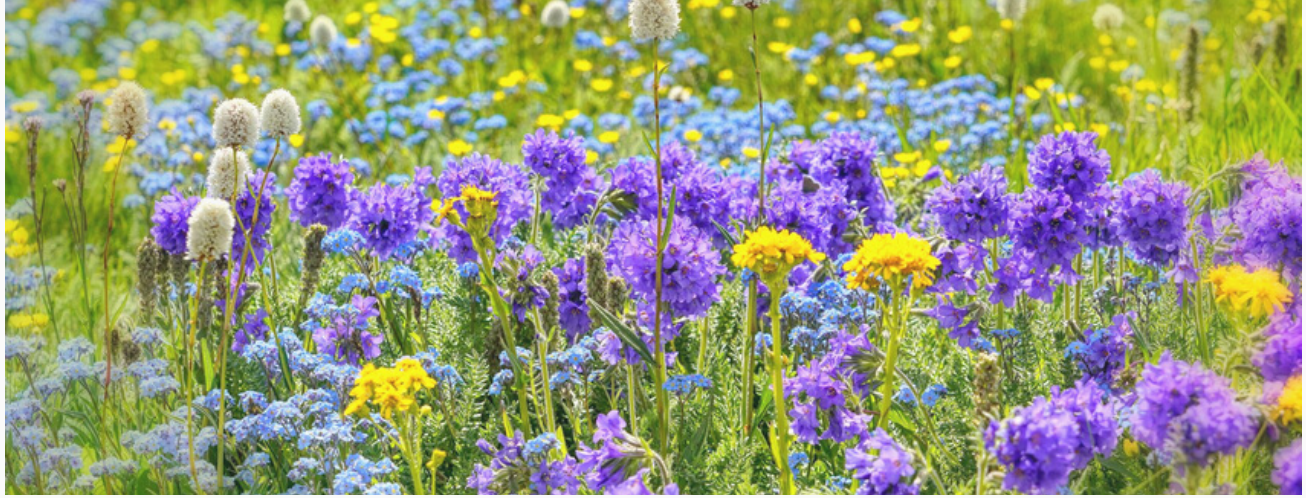


# How do I start a wildflower meadow?



**This is a common question and the answer is...be patient.**

It may take months before your ground is ready to plant. Start by eliminating all vegetation where flower seeds are to be planted. You could accomplish this by repeated very shallow tilling (avoid deep tilling because it often brings new weed seeds to the surface) or spraying a non-residual herbicide.

When the ground is clear of vegetation prepare the soil as you would a smooth, fine seedbed for grass, getting rid of clods. It's best to sow wildflower seeds in the early spring or fall. Fall works well if the area will receive snow cover in winter, but not so well if the area in winter is dry and exposed to wind. Water will help seed germinate, but do not over-water because this will encourage weed seeds that grow like rockets and overwhelm well-mannered wildflowers. Expect to do some hand weeding the first few years.

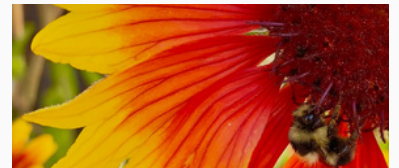
We like sowing clump forming native grasses with wildflowers because it looks more natural and grasses that grow from rhizomes will eventually choke out the wildflowers.

You may ask yourself, should I fertilize my wildflower meadow? No, wildflowers are best left unpampered. Too much fertilizer and they get leggy and floppy. Wildflowers are used to fending for themselves.

Source: Blake Nursery, Big Timber, Montana

## **Tips:**

Look at what wildflower species are already growing on site. They are adapted to your site's particular light and soil needs, and will be most successful.



Ensure the species are NATIVE to Montana and NOT invasive. May seed packets include oxeye daisy and spotted knapweed - both NOXIOUS WEEDS!

