

## BEACHGRASS PLANTING

American Beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligulata*) can be purchased from commercial growers or collected by thinning native stands. Thinning native stands must be done with extreme care in order to avoid creation of new areas of erosion. Plants should be taken only from back dune areas or protected areas that have dense stands of beach grass.

### Thinning Native stands of Beachgrass

Dig clumps of beach grass with a shovel, shake to release the sand, separate into groups of three live culms (stems) each, and remove dead culms, blades and underground stems. Culms can be trimmed to a length of about 18" from basal node to make planting easier. Culms must be kept cool and moist and planted as soon as possible.

### Planting Procedure

Beachgrass can be planted successfully from October 15th to April 15th (the best time is from January through March) when the ground is not frozen. Survival rates are much lower in the summer months. Open a hole 12-14 inches deep with a narrow-bladed spade. Space holes 18-24 inches apart, stagger rows for maximum sand entrapment. Place culms (three culms per hole) in hole with basal node seven to nine inches below surface of the sand. Pack the sand around the plants by stomping the sand next to the plants with a foot to eliminate air from the root zone.

Fertilize in spring months only. Use inorganic granular fertilizers such as 10-10-10 or 15-10-10 at a rate of 80 pounds per acre (2 pounds per 1000 square feet). Care should be taken to fertilize only the areas of beachgrass planting. Avoid broadcasting fertilizer on adjacent wetlands or waterways.

### Coverage

Roughly 3000 culms, at three culms per hole, are enough to cover an area of about 2000 square feet (40 feet by 50 feet); about 60,000 culms will cover one acre. Studies have shown that a 90 foot wide strip of vigorously growing beachgrass, planted perpendicular to the prevailing wind direction, will trap and retain all of the sand being blown by the wind. Therefore, in order to get the maximum dune stabilization, the planted areas should be at least 90 feet wide.

### Other Dune Plants

Other native plants that will grow on dunes include Seaside goldenrod, Beach pea, Bayberry, Dusty miller, weeping love grass and beach plum. Non-native plants that do well at coastal locations include Japanese black pine, Rugosa rose, Wichuriana rose, bristly locust, and autumn olive.