

TEMPERATE GRASSES

COCKSFOOT (*Dactylis glomerata*)

A tussocky perennial grass suited to low fertility soils. Tolerates acid soils. Good persistence under appropriate grazing management. Sow in autumn or spring (irrigated and tablelands). Minimum average rainfall for species: 450 mm Southern NSW, 750 mm Northern NSW.

Sowing rate: 1–3 kg/ha.

Select varieties on the basis of:

- **Plant type:** Varieties of Mediterranean origin tend to have a less erect growth habit and tolerate heavy grazing pressure better than those of European origin that are generally more erect and summer active. Mediterranean varieties have greater summer dormancy

than European varieties. Therefore they have a greater chance of persisting in a summer dry environment (e.g. southern NSW) than a summer active variety. Intermediate types have characteristics between the two main plant types.

- **Rust resistance:** Check details of the resistance of varieties if located in a high rainfall area (e.g. Northern Tablelands). Rust reduces yield, especially in autumn.
- **Performance:** Persistence and seasonal productivity – check local trial results where available.

Seed available:

Variety/brand	Main Seed Source
Mediterranean type, high summer dormancy	
Kasbah	Seedmark/ PlantTech
Mediterranean type, moderate summer dormancy	
Currie	Public variety
Gobur	Vicseeds
Intermediate type, summer active	
Porto	Public variety
Grasslands Kara Φ	PGG Seeds
Grasslands Tekapo	Wrightson Seeds
Howlong	Heritage Seeds
Grasslands Vision Φ	Cropmark Seeds
Grasslands Wana	Cropmark Seeds
Yarck	Vic Seeds
Oxen	Seed Distributors

GRAZING BROME (*Bromus stamineus*)

A perennial grass closely related to prairie grass but finer-leaved and finer tillered but resistant to head smut. Most growth in the winter-spring. Suited to well-drained soils. It requires close frequent grazing to

perform well and persist.

Sow in autumn. Sowing rate: 25 kg/ha. Minimum average rainfall: 600 mm in Southern NSW to 750 mm in Northern NSW.

Variety: Grasslands Gala Φ (PGG Seeds)

PASTURE BROME (*Bromus valdivianus*)

A perennial grass with most growth in the spring/summer period with moderate growth in winter. Suited to fertile, well-drained soils.

Sowing rate 25–30 kg/ha. Suggested minimum average annual rainfall, 600 mm in Southern NSW, 750 mm in Northern NSW

Variety: Baren0 (Heritage Seeds)

PERENNIAL VELDT GRASS (*Ehrharta calycina*)

Tufted perennial grass with most growth in autumn, spring and summer. Suited to light sandy soils and useful for erosion control. Sow in autumn or early spring. Sensitive to heavy grazing. Rotational grazing

preferred for good persistence. Sowing rate: 0.5–3.0 kg/ha.

Average annual rainfall: 550 mm Southern NSW, 600 mm in Northern NSW

Variety: Mission (Public variety)

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TEMPERATE LEGUMES

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PHALARIS (*Phalaris aquatica*)

Perennial grass which grows mainly in late autumn, winter and spring. Better suited to moderate to high fertility soils. Sensitive to acid soils. Tolerates wet soils, flooding, and moderately saline soils. Very persistent with appropriate management.

All varieties can cause phalaris poisoning. Rotational grazing preferred, especially for semi erect and erect types. Sow in autumn or early spring (irrigated and tablelands).

Sowing rate: 1–3 kg/ha. Minimum annual rainfall: 525 mm Southern NSW and 700 mm in Northern NSW

Select varieties on the basis of:

- **Plant habit:** The more prostrate types are more competitive with weeds, and when well established tend to be more persistent. However they tend to be less productive in winter compared to erect types. Erect types require more careful grazing management techniques where persistence is a priority.
- **Seedling vigour:** Reducing competition from broadleaf weeds and annual grasses is vital in the establishment phase as phalaris seedlings are not very vigorous. This is particularly important in low rainfall marginal areas. Erect varieties have greater seedling

vigour than prostrate types.

- **Need for summer dormancy:** In areas where summer rainfall is infrequent and erratic summer dormancy is a defence mechanism that may enhance persistence. This is important in areas such as the northern slopes and western areas of the State.
- **Phalaris poisoning potential:** While all varieties can potentially cause poisoning, some have been selected to reduce the risk. In areas with a known problem, selection of varieties for this characteristic may assist, although livestock

management of this problem is critical.

- **Acid soil tolerance:** Phalaris as a species is relatively intolerant of soil acidity especially where soil aluminium is high and phosphorus levels are low. Some varieties have been developed for improved tolerance of acidic soil conditions. In marginal situations use of these varieties may improve long-term productivity and persistence.
- **Performance:** Seek local trial results (if available), for seasonal yields and persistence.

Seed available:		
Variety	Comment	Main Seed Source
Prostrate, semi winter dormant, low summer dormancy		
Australian		Public variety
Uneta		Public variety
Grasslands Maru		Wrightson Seeds
Australian II ♂		Seedmark/PlantTech
Grazier		Seed Distributors
Semi erect to erect, winter active, low summer dormancy		
Sirosa		Public variety
Sirolan		Public variety
Holdfast ♂	Improved acid soil tolerance	Seedmark/PlantTech
Landmaster ♂	Improved acid soil tolerance	Seedmark/PlantTech
Erect, winter active, medium to high summer dormancy		
Atlas PG ♂		Seedmark/PlantTech

PRAIRIE GRASS (*Bromus willdenowii*)

An annual to or short-lived perennial grass. Most growth in autumn, winter and spring. Suited to fertile, well-drained soils. Must be rotationally grazed for good production and persistence. Sow in autumn. Sowing rate: 7–60 kg/ha up

to 40–60 kg/ha for under irrigation. Minimum average rainfall: 850 mm

Seed available:

Grasslands Matua (Wrightson Seeds)
Atom (PGG Seeds)

PUCCINELLIA (*Puccinellia ciliata*)

Perennial. Growth in autumn, winter and spring; dormant in summer. Tolerates saline soils better than tall wheatgrass, but is less vigorous. Tolerant of poorly drained areas. Usually sown in mixtures, with tall

wheatgrass and strawberry clover, except in very saline soils. Sow in autumn (dryland); autumn or late winter to early spring (irrigated). Puccinellia is not a highly productive grass and is sensitive to heavy grazing. Sowing rate: 3 kg/ha.

Minimum average annual rainfall for this species: 400 mm Southern NSW 500 mm Northern NSW.

Variety: Menemen (Puccinellia is also sold as sweet grass) – Public variety

RYEGRASS – PERENNIAL (*Lolium perenne*)

A highly nutritious winter/spring growing perennial. It is best suited to fertile soils. Low drought resistance. Short-lived on North Coast. In drier situations it suits higher altitudes. Minimum average annual rainfall 700 mm in Southern NSW, 800 mm in Northern NSW. Sowing rate: 3–20 kg/ha.

Select varieties on the basis of:

- **Maturity:** Earlier flowering varieties tend to be suited to the drier areas of the perennial ryegrass zone. These varieties tend to produce feed earlier in winter, and less yield later in spring. Later maturity enables later feed production where moisture (e.g. irrigation) and temperature permit.
- **Plant type:** Tetraploid types have double the number of chromosomes that diploid types have. This characteristic means that plant cells are larger, and as a consequence, plant parts tend to be larger (e.g. larger leaves). There is some evidence that they are more palatable than diploid types. They produce well under high input systems of management.
- **Rust resistance:** On the coast and in humid growing areas, resistance to rust can be very important. Check with your seed source as to latest rust resistance information for your area.
- **Persistence and seasonal production:** Refer to local trial results (if available).

- **Endophyte:** Endophyte is a fungus living within the plant and capable of producing toxins. The type of endophyte present can affect production and/or persistence. High endophyte ryegrass has been associated with better establishment and persistence, although detrimental effects including ryegrass staggers and other production losses have been attributed to the presence of specific endophytes. The effects in NSW have yet to be fully clarified. However, positive effects on establishment and persistence are apparent on the South Coast where black beetle is a problem. Varieties are available with or without endophyte.

Varieties are now available that contain novel endophyte (AR1). This endophyte may enhance production and persistence. It relies on peramine to deter insects and produces no ergovaline (potential cause of a number of livestock health disorders) and no lolitrem B (cause of ryegrass staggers). Meridian Plus AR1, Cannon AR1, Bronsyn Plus AR1 and Samson AR1 contain AR1 endophyte.

The varieties Boomer, Camel, Roper and Prolong sold under the brand 'Staggerfree' have no endophyte and hence no lolitrem B. Other varieties listed may or may not contain endophyte. (see NSW DPI. Agfact P2.3.9 *Endophytes of perennial ryegrass and tall fescue* for further information).

Seed available:

Variety/brand	Main Seed Source
Very early maturing diploids	
Boomer ♂	Valley Seeds
Fitzroy ♂	Wrightson Seeds
Kangaroo Valley	Public variety
Matilda	Parkseeds
Meridian Plus AR1 ♂	Heritage Seeds
Skippy	Vicseeds
Drylander	Seed Distributors
Everlast	Seed Distributors
Early maturing diploids	
Ausvic ♂	Vicseeds
Camel ♂	Valley Seeds
Kingston ♂	PGG Seeds
Roper ♂	Valley Seeds
Victorian	Public variety
Tomson	Seed Distributors
Mid season diploids	
Avalon ♂	Vicseeds
Bolton ♂	Vicseeds
Grasslands	PGG Seeds
Commando ♂	
Bronsyn Plus AR1 ♂	Heritage Seeds
Cannon ♂	PGG Seeds
Cannon AR1 ♂	PGG Seeds
Cowmax	Valley Seeds
CM105HP	
Extreme	Wrightson Seeds
Grasslands Nui	Public variety
Lincoln ♂	Wrightson Seeds
Prolong ♂	Valley Seeds
Samson ♂	PGG Seeds
Samson AR1 ♂	PGG Seeds
Late season tetraploids	
Bealey ♂	Heritage Seeds
Canasta	Seed Distributors
Grasslands Sterling	PGG Seeds
Optima	Seed Distributors
Quartet ♂	Wrightson Seeds

RYEGRASS – SHORT-TERM FORAGE

This large group of ryegrasses range from those suited for use as annual forage crops to varieties with a high content of perennial component which are capable of producing good yields of good quality forage under good management and growing conditions for up to 3 years. They require high fertility soil and good moisture for best results. Minimum average rainfall, 750 mm in Southern NSW, 800 mm in Northern NSW. Sowing rate: 8–25 kg/ha. 2 kg/ha

useful in mixtures with short-term legumes.

Select varieties on the basis of:

- **Length of production period needed:** (1–3 years).
- **Maturity:** Earlier flowering varieties tend to be suited to the drier areas of the perennial ryegrass zone. These varieties produce feed earlier in the winter, and less later in the spring. Later maturity enables later feed production

where moisture (e.g. irrigation) and temperature permit.

- **Plant type:** Tetraploid types have double the number of chromosomes that diploid types have. This characteristic means that plant cells are larger, and as a consequence, plant parts tend to be larger (e.g. larger leaves). There is some evidence that they are more palatable than diploid types. They produce well under high input systems of management.

- **Rust resistance:** On the coast and in humid growing areas, resistance to rust can be very important. Check with your seed source as to latest rust resistance information for your area.
- **Persistence and seasonal production:** refer to local trial results (if available).
- **Endophyte:** Endophyte is a fungus living within perennial ryegrass and capable of producing toxins. The type of endophyte present can affect production and/or persistence. High endophyte ryegrass has been associated with better establishment and persistence, although detrimental affects including ryegrass staggers and other production losses have been attributed to the presence of specific endophytes. The effects in NSW have yet to be clarified although positive effects on establishment and persistence are apparent on the South Coast where black beetle is a problem. Varieties are now available that contain novel endophyte (i.e. AR1). They are Grasslands Supreme Plus AR1, Impact Plus AR1 and Galaxy AR1. This endophyte (AR1) relies on peramine to deter insects and produces no ergovaline (potential cause of a number of livestock health disorders) and no lolitrem B (cause of ryegrass staggers). Other varieties listed may or may not contain endophyte. (see NSW DPI. Agfact P2.3.9 *Endophytes of perennial ryegrass and tall fescue* for further information).

Perennial type hybrids

These hybrids have more perennial component than Italian rye in their breeding. They are generally capable of 2–3 years production with potential for extended life under good management and seasonal conditions. Matrix is a perennial ryegrass hybrid with *Festuca pratensis* (meadow fescue). It has similar characteristics and management requirements to perennial ryegrass hybrids with other *Lolium* spp and is included in this category for these reasons.

Seed available:	
Varieties/brand	Main Seed Source
Mid season flowering diploid	
Grasslands Supreme ^{Plus}	PGG Seeds
Revolution ♂	Cropmark
Grasslands Supreme Plus AR1	PGG Seeds
Mid season flowering tetraploid	
Horizon	PGG Seeds
Mid - late season flowering tetraploid	
Banquet ♂	Wrightson Seeds
Barberia ♂	Heritage Seeds
Late season flowering diploid	
Impact Plus AR1 ♂	Heritage Seeds
Matrix ♂	Cropmark

Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*)

These varieties are capable of producing for 1–2 years under suitable growing conditions and management.

Seed available:	
Variety/brand	Main Seed Source
Early season flowering diploid	
Dargo ♂	Vicseeds
Mid season flowering diploid	
Caversham	Wrightson Seeds
Eclipse ♂	Valley Seeds
Late season flowering diploid	
Concord	Wrightson Seeds
Conquest	Wrightson Seeds
Crusader ♂	PGG Seeds
Hulk ♂	Heritage Seeds
Grasslands Status ^{Plus}	PGG Seeds
Grasslands Warrior ♂	PGG Seeds
Mariner ♂	Heritage Seeds
Marbella ^{Sud}	PGG Seeds
Tabu ♂	Heritage Seeds
Diplex	Seed Distributors
Sonik ♂	Cropmark
Late season flowering tetraploid	
Feast II	Wrightson Seeds
Denver ♂	Michel Belair

Italian type hybrids

These varieties have less perennial component than Italian ryegrass, and are capable of contributing worthwhile production for 1–2 years.

Seed available:	
Variety/brand	Main Seed Source
Mid season flowering tetraploid	
Galaxy	PGG Seeds
Galaxy AR1	PGG Seeds
Cross fire	Seed distributors
Magnum	Seed distributors
Late season flowering diploid	
Maverick Gold ♂	Wrightson Seeds

Annual Italian ryegrasses (*Lolium multiflorum*)

These varieties/brands are limited to one year's production only – grown as a forage crop. This group is also referred to as the Westerwolths (or Westerwolds) ryegrasses.

Seed available:	
Varieties/brand	Main Seed Source
Early flowering diploids	
Aristocrat	Public
Noble ♂	Valley Seeds
Early flowering tetraploids	
Betta Tetila	Parkseeds
Drummer	Seedmark/PlantTech
Growmore Plus	Seedmark/PlantTech
New Tetila	Vicseeds
Tetila (USA)	Public variety
Tetila Gold	Seedmark/PlantTech
Mid season flowering diploids	
Ceres Missile	PGG Seeds
Progrow ♂	Valley Seeds
Surrey	Heritage Seeds
Ceres Pronto	PGG Seeds
Mid season flowering tetraploids	
Andy	Cropmark
Grasslands Tama	Public variety
Robust ♂	Seedmark/PlantTech
T Rex	Heritage Seeds
Winter Star	Wrightson Seeds
Winter Star II	Wrightson Seeds
Tetrone	Seed Distributors
Rocket	Seed Distributors

RYEGRASS – ANNUAL (*Lolium rigidum*)

Annual self-regenerating aggressive winter-spring growing ryegrass. Suited to drier margin of ryegrass zone. Note that this species can be a weed in winter crops. Annual ryegrass toxicity, ergot and herbicide

resistance can be a problem with this species. Minimum average annual rainfall: 400 mm in Southern NSW, 600 mm in Northern NSW. Usually sown at 15 kg/ha when sown alone or 5–10 kg/ha in a mixture.

Varieties: Guard (Valley Seeds) – selected for resistance to Annual Ryegrass Toxicity
Wimmera (Public variety)
CowMax CM108 Aristocrat 11 (Valley Seeds)
Cash Φ (Michel Belair)

Michel Belair

SEED TECHNOLOGY

For further information contact:

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TALL FESCUE (*Festuca arundinacea*)

Tussocky perennial grass. It is suited to a wide range of soils and tolerant of acid and moderately saline conditions, but also tolerates short periods of flooding. It is moderately persistent and drought tolerant depending on plant type, soil type and grazing management. In drier areas it is best suited to high altitudes. Sow in autumn or spring (irrigated and tablelands).

Sowing rate: 6–15 kg/ha. Minimum annual rainfall for temperate fescue: 700 mm with a summer dominance and 450 mm (winter dominant) for Mediterranean types (see below)

Select varieties on the basis of:

- **Plant type:** Two types are marketed – temperate and Mediterranean. Temperate types grow vigorously in spring, summer and autumn but less in winter. They are adapted to those areas with summer dominant rainfall, higher elevation areas or under irrigation. Mediterranean types have a more pronounced winter and spring production and are dormant over summer. This means they are more tolerant of summer moisture stress than temperate types.
- **Seedling vigour:** Fescue is slow to establish. Varieties with improved seedling vigour may enhance establishment.
- **Rust resistance:** Rust can be a problem in the autumn especially

in high rainfall districts. Select varieties with high rust resistance where rust is known to be a problem.

- **Performance:** Seek local trial results (if available), for seasonal yields and persistence.
- **Endophyte:** Endophyte is a fungus living within the plant and capable of producing alkaloids toxic to livestock. Current tall fescue varieties available in NSW are free of wild-type endophyte. Older varieties (pre release of Demeter) e.g. Alta and Kentucky-31 may contain high levels of wild-type endophyte. In areas with a long history of tall fescue use (pre 1960) such as the Northern Tablelands of NSW there is the potential for animal health problems associated with endophyte, however, reports of such problems are not common. It is important to note that all turf varieties of tall fescue contain wild-type endophyte.

Safe endophyte (also known as novel) varieties of tall fescue are available in NSW and are traded as MaxP. These endophytes do not produce alkaloids toxic to livestock but do produce ‘plant-friendly’ alkaloids that deter insects and have other reported benefits to the plant (see NSW DPI. Agfact P2.3.9 *Endophytes of perennial ryegrass and tall fescue*

Seed available:	
Variety/brand	Main Seed Source
Temperate type, very early flowering	
AU Triumph	Public variety
Dovey	Heritage Seeds
Quantum	Wrightson Seeds
Quantum Max P	Wrightson Seeds
Temperate type, mid – late flowering	
Advance ♂	PGG Seeds
Demeter	Public variety
Jesup Max P ♂	PGG Seeds
Lunibelle	Cropmark
Typhoon	PGG Seeds
Temperate type, late flowering	
Vulcan II	Wrightson Seeds
Carmine	Seeds Distributors
Mediterranean type, mid season flowering (= ‘winter active - summer dormant types’)	
Flecha Max P ♂	PGG Seeds
Fraydo ♂	Seedmark/PlantTech
Resolute ♂	Wrightson Seeds
Resolute Max P ♂	Wrightson Seeds
Origin	Seed Distributors

for further information).

- **Other factors** that may be of importance are maturity, leaf digestibility or quality, rhizomatous spread potential.

TALL WHEATGRASS (*Thinopyrum ponticum*)

Tussocky perennial. Grows mainly in spring and autumn. Suited to saline, poorly drained soils. Sow in early autumn for best results (dryland) or late winter to early spring (irrigated and high rainfall). Slow to establish.

Tall growth. Useful pioneering species in saline soils. Sowing rate: 3–12 kg/ha. Minimum average annual rainfall: 400 mm Southern NSW, 500 mm Northern NSW

Varieties:

- Tyrrell (Public variety)
- Dundas ♂ (Wrightson Seeds) – selected for increased feed quality.

TIMOTHY (*Phleum pratense*)

A shallow rooted tufted perennial, growing in spring, summer and autumn. Grows best in high fertility, high moisture holding capacity soils in areas not prone to drought. It is

very palatable to livestock. Minimum average annual rainfall 900 mm (winter dominant). Sowing rate 1–2 kg/ha in mixtures, 5–8 kg/ha alone as the only grass.

Varieties:

- Viking (PGG Seeds)
- Charlton (PGG Seeds)

NATIVE GRASSES

WALLABY GRASS (*Austrodanthonia* spp.)

A perennial drought tolerant year-long green native grass. Will tolerate low soil fertility but will respond to fertiliser applications if soil is deficient in nutrients. Sow in late autumn/early winter, no deeper than 0.5 cm. Sowing rate: 0.3–2.0

kg/ha. Minimum average annual rainfall; 400 mm Southern NSW, 500 mm Northern NSW. Select varieties on the basis of adaptation to soil type. Seed is very scarce and expensive.

Varieties:

Taranna ϕ (*A. richardsonii*), suited to medium textured soils (Premier Seeds)
Bunderra ϕ (*A. bipartita*), Heavy textured clay soils (Native Seeds P/L)
Hume (Native Seeds Pty. Ltd.)

MITCHELL GRASS (*Astrebala lappacea*) = Curly Mitchell grass

Perennial tufted summer growing native grass with rhizomes. It is best suited to heavy grey cracking clay soils in North West NSW. Seed is best sown very shallow (< 1 cm deep) at 1–2 kg/ha in early or late summer.

Seed should be greater than 12 months old at sowing. Note that seed is expensive and scarce (2006).

Seed available: Yanda ϕ (Native Seeds Pty Ltd)

WEEPING GRASS (*Microlaena stipoides*) = Weeping rice grass

Year-long green perennial grass that produces high quality forage. Spreads by seed and short rhizomes. Adapted to higher rainfall areas of Tablelands and alps throughout NSW. Suited to a wide range of soils, but is best on loams.

Seed is best sown between 1 and 2 cm deep at 3 to 5 kg/ha when soil moisture can be guaranteed following sowing. Seedling growth rate is slow for first 6 months.

Seed available:

Ovens, Bremmer, Burra, Griffin ϕ (Native Seeds Pty. Ltd.)

KANGAROO GRASS (*Themeda australis*) syn *T. triandra*

Very widespread native grass noted for active summer growth and upright reddish coloured seedheads. Occurs naturally from alpine areas to coastal areas to dry inland in NSW. Perennial grass of great longevity which can be of good grazing value when green. Becomes rank and unpalatable if not grazed or mowed in summer.

Seed is very expensive as production is low and cleaning is difficult. Clean seed should be sown in spring to around 1 cm depth at 1 to 2 kg/ha into a prepared seedbed. Summer rainfall or storms are required to have it fully established prior to winter dormancy. Seedling growth is strong but plants are susceptible to grazing at early stages. Some low quality

seed sources are available, but results are very unreliable from this seed.

Seed available:

Burrill (Native Seeds Pty. Ltd.)