

ORCHARDGRASS

Orchardgrass is often used in hay and pasture mixes with other grasses and legumes because it establishes rapidly and recovers quickly after grazing or harvesting. Its major limitation is a lack of winterhardiness, but it can persist and remain productive in areas with reliable snow cover.

Orchardgrass varieties were established in pure stands in 1997, 1998 and 2002 at Rosemount, and in 1998 and 2002 at Grand Rapids.

Experimental plots were generally harvested three times per year at Rosemount and two or three times per year at Grand Rapids. Nitrogen was applied in the early spring and after the first and second harvest at rate of 50 pounds per acre for each application. Injury to all varieties was moderate to severe in 2003.

Dry matter yield of orchardgrass, in tons dry matter per acre, of orchardgrass varieties seeded at two locations.

Variety	Seedlot	Winter* Injury 5/1/03	Rosemount			Grand Rapids		
			1998-00	1999-02	2003-4	1990-1994	1999-01	2004
AC Nordic	3222	—	—	3.4	—	—	3.7	—
Albert	3152	—	—	—	—	—	3.9	—
Ambassador	2678	—	4.4	—	—	3.5	3.6	—
Bengal	3247	—	—	3.5	—	—	—	—
Condor	3162	—	4.5	—	—	—	3.8	—
Crown	2635	—	4.5	—	—	3.5	—	—
Dawn	2648	—	—	—	—	3.6	—	—
Duke	3237	2.8	4.8	3.5	3.8	—	3.8	1.6
Elsie	3218	—	—	3.4	—	3.5	3.5	—
Extend	3496	4.5	—	—	3.8	—	—	1.4
Haymate	3147	—	4.5	—	—	—	3.7	—
Hawkeye	3219	4	—	3.8	4	—	3.9	1.6
Justus	3240	4	4.5	3.5	3.7	3.4	3.4	1.4
Megabite	3220	3.5	—	3.8	3.9	—	3.7	1.6
Mammoth	3248	—	—	3.7	—	—	—	—
Napier	3250	—	4.3	—	—	3.6	—	—
Orbit	2669	—	3.6	—	—	3.4	—	—
Orion	2979	3.8	4.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	4.1	1.4
Potomac	3238	2.8	4.4	3.3	4.1	3.5	—	1.3
Shawnee	3221	—	—	—	—	—	3.0	—
Sterling	2680	—	—	—	—	3.4	—	—
Warrior	3241	4.5	—	3.5	3.6	—	—	1.5
LSD 5%		1.5	0.4	0.2	NS	NS	0.4	NS

*Winter injury, 9 = worst

Orchardgrass Planting Rate and Date

Bushel Weight, Pounds14

Seeds/Pound.....653,000

Planting Rate, Pounds/Acre

Alone10

In Mixtures.....3

Planting Rate, Seeds Sq.Ft.

Alone150

In Mixtures.....45

Planting Date

AloneEarly Spring or Late Summer

In Mixtures.....Use Date for Legume