

# LITTLE BLUESTEM

Schizachyrium scoparium



## ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION

Native to U.S. and widely distributed across the U.S. Primary species of midwestern prairies. Warm season, long-lived, perennial bunchgrass. Erect large growth, 1 to 4' tall, largely tufted with occasional short rhizomes. Light blue-green when young, reddish brown when mature. Deep fibrous root system. Semi-sod forming in sub-humid zones and sites.

## GROWTH HABITS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

Resumes growth in spring, heads develop in late summer and matures in fall. Tolerant to wide range of sandy and clayey soils with adequate soil moisture. Silty soils optimal. Common on sandy and sands range sites. Not adapted to wetlands and saline sub-irrigated sites. Best stands

on limey uplands in Nebraska and on calcareous soils from limestone in southern U.S. Low to fair fertility requirements. Grows in 10 to 20" ppt. areas optimal at 15 to 20" ppt. from 1,000 to 7,500' elevation.

## CULTURE

Drill 1/4 – 1/2" deep on finer soils and 3/4" on coarse soils on prepacked or otherwise firm seedbeds. Soil. Topsoil or supplemental mulches are recommended for bare, eroded and disturbed sites. Use 3.5 to 7 lbs PLS per acre seeding rate. If broadcast seeded double the seeding rate. Plant in March or April in southern and April or May in central and higher western Great Plains areas. Control weeds by grazing, herbicides or clipping.

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Used for hay, pasture, game cover and landscaping. Seeded in conservation projects including, eroded fields, roadsides, gullies and prairie restoration. Often used in mixtures with other species in prairie restoration projects such as: big bluestem, sideoats grama, and others. Most palatable in early grazing season and throughout summer. Not palatable in winter to cattle. May be burned in late spring on damp soil. Consider wildlife in total management plan.

## IMPROVED VARIETIES

- 'Aldous' released from Kansas.
- 'Blaze' released from Nebraska.
- 'Camper' released from Nebraska.
- 'Cimarron' released from Kansas and Oklahoma.
- 'Pastura' released from New Mexico.
- 'Itasca' released from North Dakota.

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