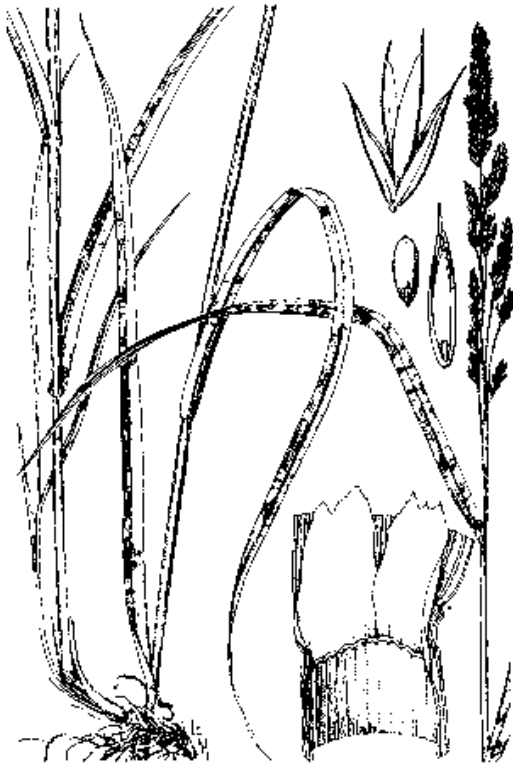


# ORCHARDGRASS

*Dactylis glomerata*



## ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION

Introduced from central and Western Europe as a high yielding good quality forage plant. It is a cool season, leafy bunchgrass 3 to 4' tall. Leaves long, soft and palatable. Head tight panicle 4 to 6" tall. Wide adaptation to sub-humid or irrigated conditions.

## GROWTH HABITS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

Best production on medium-textured, well-drained, fertile, calcareous, neutral or medium acid soils, also on alluvial soils moderately fine texture and medium acid to mildly saline. Adapted to irrigated and high rainfall areas 18"

ppt. in the Intermountain and western states. Shade tolerant. Adapted to high mountain meadows on good soils.

## CULTURE

Plant seeds at 1/4 - 1/2" deep, using 1.5 to 3.0 lbs. PLS per acre. Alternate row seeding recommended for pasture and forage production with legumes. Spring planting recommended, especially for irrigated seedings and on soils subject to crusting or frost heaving. Late fall planting satisfactory when planted in clean stubble or fallowed seedbed. Weed control necessary. Heavier seeding rates 4 to 8 lbs. PLS per acre can help to reduce weed competition. Should not be grazed until after first cutting to establish stubble height.

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Major forage grass, excellent for irrigated hay and pastures. Does well in mixtures with alfalfa and other grasses and legumes. Pasture mixtures must be managed well to maintain orchard grass in stands. New plantings should not be grazed until the plants are fully established. A 6" stubble should be maintained for plant vigor. Allow plants to make 10 to 12" growth in the spring before grazing and 4 to 5 weeks regrowth between cuttings or grazing cycles. Very palatable but will not withstand heavy grazing. Good grazing management is needed.

## IMPROVED VARIETIES

Forty strains or cultivars are listed in the 1994 Grass Varieties of the United States USDA SCS Handbook 170. Consult with state or local plant materials specialists for varieties best adapted to specific sites and purposes. However, 'Paiute' released from Utah and Idaho has good drought tolerance, and 'Pomar' from Idaho is a low growing selection. These two are different from most other large forage types.

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