

Sorghum

Pawnee Buttes Seed offers Arapahoe (BMR) and Arikaree sorghum sudans and Bundle King forage sorghum. Sorghum is known as a high-energy, drought tolerant crop with inherent tolerance to marginal lands and harsh environmental conditions. It is versatile as a forage and feed grain. Sorghums have the ability to produce high yields while using one third less water than comparable feedstocks.

Sorghums are a warm season, annual crop with a growing season from May 15 to September 15. The multiple uses of sorghums make them a viable alternative to corn for forage uses in Colorado. It is extremely drought tolerant requiring less water than corn or alfalfa with comparable yields. Maximum forage quality for hay is best obtained when the first cutting is taken when the plant is 3 to 4 feet tall. Weather and moisture permitting, a second cutting can sometimes be harvested and the resulting residues can then be grazed late in the season.

Forage type sorghums can be planted in mid May and then grazed once the plant reaches 2 to 3 feet tall. Caution should be taken not to graze the plant lower than the bottom leaf as then the resulting re-growth can be grazed again later in the season.

Silage type sorghums can have yields very comparable and often higher than corn silage. Sorghum silage will not net the nutritional energy of corn silage. However with dramatically fewer inputs, supplemental energy can be added back into the sorghum ration, netting the producer more overall profit.

Contact one of our sales consultants to see how sorghums may profit your operation.

Russian Wildrye – The Key to Versatility

Russian Wildrye under irrigation is a very versatile species because you can turn the water off or on at anytime during the growing season. Traditional irrigated pasture grasses such as orchardgrass, bromegrass, tall fescue and perennial ryegrass can not survive under this kind of management.

Russian Wildrye is a very palatable and digestible cool season, perennial bunchgrass. It has an abundance of long, dense, basal leaves that are from 6 to 18 inches long and 1/4 inch in width.

Russian Wildrye works very well in dryland, limited irrigated and irrigated pastures. As a pasture grass, it recovers rapidly after grazing if adequate moisture is available. Because of this, it is well adapted for irrigated pastures in rotational grazing systems. It also responds well to fertility and supplemental irrigation.

Russian Wildrye is best adapted for pasture in dry areas. It greens up very early in the spring starting growth slightly later than Crested Wheatgrass. It is very tolerant of grazing and regrowth is very rapid. The forage is very palatable to all classes of livestock and maintains good nutritional quality for winter maintenance rations by retaining higher levels of protein than most grasses after maturity.

Once established, Russian Wildrye is very competitive at reducing weed issues in well maintained stands. In addition, it is highly palatable to wildlife, especially deer, elk and antelope. Originally introduced from Siberia, it is well adapted on silty loam to heavy clay soils.

It grows well up to 7,500 feet elevation in northern latitudes and 9,000 feet in southern latitudes. It is exceptionally cold and drought tolerant and has a high tolerance to salinity. However, it is not tolerant of spring flooding or high water tables. Because of its high digestibility, drought tolerance and long season of use, Russian Wildrye can be used in a variety of situations.

The Bozoiisky Select variety of Russian Wildrye has proven to have greater palatability and higher yields than older varieties such as Vinal or Swift. It is faster to germinate and establishes more rapidly than other varieties.

References:

Plant Materials Service, USDA-NRCS, 2004.Plant Guide