

Grass Identification

Martin RC. Forage Grass Species. Lecture, Managed Grasslands CROP*3340, University of

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	Identifying Features	Information	Nutrition	Yield
Perennial Ryegrass	-leaves folded in a whorl, glossy, flat, smooth -pointed leaves	-high quality -adapted to mild winters and cool summers -not tolerant to low fertility, drought, heat stress -persists and produces better under rotational grazing -Often used for dairy pastures -tolerates close grazing -establish quickly	-good palatability	Lasts for 2-3 years
Smooth Brome	-deep roots -"W" shape on leaves which are rolled in whorl -inflorescence is open panicle with numerous spikelets (against the grain)	-grows in cool season, humid areas -not tolerant to flooding -resists drought and heat -very good winter survival -graze at late boot to early heading	-palatable -retains nutritional value as it matures	Lasts for 5+ years
Tall Fescue	-leaves are flat -ribbing/streaks in middle of leaf -sharp and spiky	-tolerates low fertility, low pH, poor drainage, drought, flooding and severe winters -good for hay and pasture	-need to plant endophyte free varieties as endophyte fungus causes alkaloids toxic to livestock (will affect pregnant broodmares)	Lasts for 5+ years
Timothy	-shallow fibrous roots -leaves are flat and smooth with rough margins,	-grows well in humid areas with severe winters -tolerates poor drainage and low	Coarse leaves decrease palatability	low yield in 2nd and 3rd cuts Lasts for 5+ years

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may twist -striped leaf -spiked panicle at the end 	<p>pH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -not tolerant to drought and heat -late maturity -easy to establish -poor regrowth -good for hay 		
Orchardgrass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -fibrous roots (extensive and deep) -smooth and bumpy -leaves are thin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -adapted to humid area, some flooding and shade -moderate winter hardiness -vigorous growth in warm, dry midsummer (more so than timothy or brome) -good for hay and early pasture Tolerates close grazing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -heads in early spring then declines quickly in digestible energy and protein 	<p>Lasts for 5 years</p>
Kentucky Bluegrass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -smooth and waxy leaves with keel/boat that is pronounced in the tip -Stems erect, fine and flattened -narrow and thin leaves -dark colour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -grows in humid areas -tolerates flooding, stops growing in droughts, then recovers -very good winter survival -withstands close, frequent grazing and trampling -re-establishes where other species thin out -slow to establish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -good quality and palatability 	<p>Lasts for 5+ years</p> <p>Low yield, esp in the summer</p>