Tetra-Plus

Perennial Ryegrass Blend

About Tetra-Plus (34)

Barenbrug Tetra-Plus is a blend of Holland government top rated, state of the art, late maturing, winter hardy perennial ryegrasses comprised of 70% premium tetraploid and 30% diploid varieties.

Palatability, disease resistance and increased production are the most important advantages to tetraploid over diploid varieties in a high fertility cut and carry management system. However, tetraploids are generally not recommended planted as a pure stand because of their greater moisture content and high crown makes tetraploids vulnerable to treading damage, which causes stand decline and loss of production. The addition of the more hardy and persistent diploid component counteracts this disadvantage resulting in a grass crop that is palatable, healthy and high producing with excellent persistence.

Tetra-Plus's combination of advantages gives the optimum balance of persistence, high yields of digestible dry matter and palatable forage for high intakes. Tetra-Plus is the best Holland has to offer its farmers. It makes the most milk and meat!

Site selection

Tetra-Plus is more hardy than other varieties, but keep in mind that ryegrasses of all varieties are less winter hardy than other perennial temperate grasses such as tall fescue, timothy, or orchard grass, care should be taken in those areas having sub-zero winters without good snow protection. Tetra-Plus is capable of good summer production in hot, arid areas if grown under irrigation, and high fertility is maintained. Like all ryegrass, Tetra-Plus does best on fertile, well-drained soils. However, it can also be planted in areas where the soil is so wet at certain times that few other grasses will grow satisfactorily. Whenever planting outside of traditional ryegrass areas, test plantings should be made first to evaluate its suitability for the environment.

Establishment

Soil samples should be collected and analyzed well in advance of establishment. In areas having acid soils, lime should be applied to achieve a soil pH of 6. Ideally, lime should be applied six months in advance to allow time to react. Phosphorous and potassium should be applied according to soil test recommendations prior to planting. At planting, apply 30-40 lb./acre nitrogen to ensure good establishment. In moderate climate regions, or in hot dry areas with irrigation, plantings may be made in both the spring and fall. Fall plantings are recommended in summer drought prone regions.

There are a number of ways Tetra-Plus can be established. Its seeding vigor and rapid establishment make it a perfect choice for no-till seeding, with or without herbicide suppression of the existing vegetation. Full cultivation seedings are best made with a Brillion type seeder, or by broadcast with a spin seeder onto a well firmed seedbed, followed by light harrowing, then rolling. The seed should not be planted deeper than 1/8 inch below the surface.

A no-till seeding rate of 15 lb./acre, 30 lb./acre for precision drilled seedings, and 35-40 lb./acre for broadcast seedings, with the higher rate recommended for Spring plantings to combat weeds, has proven satisfactory. If a legume is desired, a large-leaf, rapid growing white clover is the natural companion for Tetra-Plus. Barenbrug Alice is the clover of choice. Clover enhances pasture feed value and provides a source of valuable nitrogen. For a new seeding, plant at 2-3 lb./acre.

Management

Careful stand management during the first year is essential for long term productivity. Tetra-Plus is a blend of perennial bunch grasses. A single shoot is produced from a single seed. As this shoot is clipped off, the plant sends up multiple new shoots, or tillers, from the basal buds at the base of the plant. Likewise, as these new tillers are clipped, more tillers are formed, creating an increasingly larger bunch. This tillering and bunching continues until the spaces are filled, forming a dense, leafy stand.

Once the newly seeded plants first reach the 6-inch height they should be machine clipped to promote this tillering, leaving a 3-inch residual. Once established Tetra-Plus should be machine harvested for green chop, hay or silage at the 10-14 inch height range. Don't let it get too tall! The leaf contains the nutrients and, up to 14 inches in height, the plant is 90% leaf. When allowed to grow taller than 14 inches, the quality drops dramatically as the plant switches from producing nutritious leaves to being reproductive, as evidenced by the production of coarse stems and seed heads. Management should be aimed at maintaining a dense, leafy pasture cover.

Tetra-Plus is designed for intensive forage production under conditions of adequate moisture and high nitrogen fertility, making it ideal for situations, like dairies, where nitrogen rich water is available and requires agronomic uptake to prevent environmental pollution. For optimum production, Tetra-Plus requires annual application of at least 300 lb./acre of nitrogen if grown without cover and bout 180 lb./acre if clover is present. This application should be applied with 50 lb./acre in early spring to jump start production with the balance divided and applied after each cutting. Harvest of grass should be made in the afternoon to minimize nitrate toxicity.

Cold weather survival is enhanced by entering winter with the grass left at a short, but still green length of 4 to 5 inches.