

Orchardgrass

Dactylis glomerata



The stem of orchardgrass is nearly flat at the base. It has a tall ligule but no auricles.

Description

Perennial bunchgrass. Leaves have bluish green color compared to tall fescue. Leaf veins are much less prominent compared to tall fescue. Grows 2 to 4 feet tall in seed head stage, stems are flattened at the base. Leaves emerge from stem base folded.

Uses

Hay, pasture.

Advantages

High quality and high yields, more likely to get summer cuttings. Palatable to livestock, in high demand for hay. Well suited for use in mixtures with alfalfa and red clover.

Disadvantages

Seed heads in many varieties can appear in late April, which is a difficult time to get hay cured without rain damage. Stands become clumpy with age and have a short life (usually less than five years). Not tolerant of close cutting or continuous close grazing. Susceptible to leaf diseases.



Orchardgrass leaves are blue-green in color and emerge along the midrib of the leaf folded in half.

Seeding

Rate: 10-15 lb/a

Depth: ¼-½ in

Primary Date: Aug 15-Oct 1

Secondary Date: Feb 1-Apr 15

Harvest

First harvest: May 1-20

Annual yield: 2-4 tons dry matter/a