



SEED DISTRIBUTORS TECH SHEET



TOMSON Perennial Ryegrass

(*Lolium perenne*)

Tomson is an extremely vigorous winter ryegrass with high levels of both summer and autumn activity. Also being exceptionally adaptable to wide ranging environments with high dry matter yields year after year.

Tomson is a medium-tillered perennial ryegrass with rapid and vigorous establishment. Tomson has excellent rust tolerance, low aftermath heading and withstands grazing pressure well, especially during dry periods. Tomson responds well to autumn rains and summer irrigation. Following grazing or hay/silage cut, its rapid regrowth and adaption to a wide range of soil types.

- New Zealand germplasm Mengere parentage
- Strong winter growth, early maturity
- Strong summer/autumn activity
- High level of rust resistance
- Aggressive seedling growth with consistently high yield year round
- Persistent in both intensive irrigation and dryland extensive grazing pastures

HEADING DATE	+0 DAYS
LIFESPAN	5-7 YRS
MIN RAINFALL (mm)	700
SEEDING RATE	Kg/Ha
DRYLAND	10-15

Heading date:-
0 days = Nui perennial ryegrass



Perennial Ryegrass Agronomic Information

Strengths

- Easily established, highly productive and nutritious under grazing, moderate winter and summer growth, rapid regrowth.

Limitations

- Requires moderate to high soil fertility. Does not withstand heavy grazing pressure through drought. Susceptible to cockchafer and cricket damage.

Plant description

Plant: Densely tufted, multi-tillered perennial with fibrous root system.

Stems: 30-90 cm.

Leaves: fine (~7 mm), dark green, hairless, under surface shiny, blade folded about mid-rib in young shoot, leaf-base usually dark red.

Seedhead: spike ~20 cm, spikelet usually <10 florets/spikelet; awnless lemma.

Seeds: fawn, flat, awnless, ~6mm long. Approx. ~520,000/kg (diploid cvv).

Pasture type and use

Grazing and fodder conservation. Most widely sown pasture grass in temperate regions.

Where it grows

Rainfall: > 550mm+

Soils: Medium-heavy, moderate-high fertility (eg Olsen P >12, 0-10 cm). Tolerates slight salinity.

Temperature: Cold and frost tolerant, growth constrained by high temperature.

Establishment

Companion species:

Grasses: Perennial ryegrass.

Legumes: white clover, medics and sub clover.

Sowing/planting rates as single species: 10-25 kg/ha.

Sowing/planting rates in mixtures: 5-10 kg/ha.

Sowing time: Autumn and spring.

Fertiliser: P & possibly N at sowing.

Management

Maintenance fertiliser: requires fertile soil to persist. ~10 kg P/ha.

Monitor S, K, Cu especially. Supply N by clover/fertiliser. Maintain Colwell P ~30 (WA), Olsen P >12.

Grazing/cutting: Tolerates close, continuous grazing except if drought-stressed. Graze at 2.5-3 leaf stage to optimise yield under rotational grazing. Well suited to hay/silage.

Ability to spread: Will spread if allowed to seed.

Weed potential: Widely naturalised on fertile soils in temperate Australia.

Major pests: Red and black-headed cockchafer, black field cricket, white-fringed weevil, African black beetle, corbies, underground grass caterpillar.

Major diseases: Crown rust, stem rust, barley yellow dwarf virus, ryegrass mosaic virus.

Herbicide susceptibility: In considering selective herbicides consider the stage of growth of the ryegrass and what non-target companion species are present.

Animal production

Feeding value: High nutritive value.

Palatability: Palatable.

Production potential: High yields; highly responsive to fertiliser and irrigation.

Livestock disorders/toxicity:

Cultivars with wild endophyte can cause perennial ryegrass toxicosis and ill-thrift. Bacterial infection of seedhead can occasionally occur and result in ergot poisoning.

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