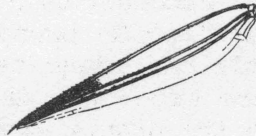


Rescuegrass



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DESCRIPTION

Rescuegrass, *Bromus catharticus*, is native to Argentina and was introduced to the United States about 150 years ago. It is a weak perennial but in Texas acts as a cool-season reseeding annual bunchgrass. The plants grow 1 to 4 feet high and have large, drooping, open seedheads (panicles). Each unit (spikelet) of the head contains several seed that are about as long and half as thick as oats. The spikelets are flattened and usually large. Leaf blades are 8 to 12 inches long and $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide. Young plants may be hairy (pubescent), becoming less so as they get older. The seed germinate in the fall and the plants grow during winter and early spring. Peak growth comes in April in Central Texas and in May in North Texas. The plants mature in late spring and early summer. Rescuegrass is an abundant seed producer and produces seed stalks very near the ground when closely grazed. The growing plants are about equal to oat plants at the same stage of growth in forage quality.

Texas Rescue 46 is an improved strain developed by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. It was released to Texas registered seed growers in 1946. This strain is upright in growth, has good seedling vigor and has some resistance to mildew. It is leafier, produces more forage and seed and matures later and more uniformly than the strains found growing naturally in the State.

ADAPTATION

Rescuegrass is best adapted to the more fertile soils of the Blackland and Grand Prairies, the eastern part of the Edwards Plateau and the West Cross Timbers. It is also found in favorable sites in East Texas, in the Rolling and northern Rio Grande Plains and in the Central Basin. The grass has a medium to high fertility requirement and will not be satisfactory on poor sandy soils low in organic matter and plant food. Its primary use is as pasture. When more grazing is produced than needed, it may be utilized as silage. Rescue may also be utilized as a seed crop.

ESTABLISHMENT

Rescuegrass should be planted in September and October. Best results will be obtained by seeding on a well-prepared seedbed that is clean and firm. It may be seeded in a Bermudagrass sod, if the Bermuda is grazed or clipped down to a height of about 4 inches. Rescue is easily planted with a grain drill, and the seed should be covered 3/4 to 1 inch. Fifteen to 25 pounds of seed per acre is a satisfactory seeding rate. Fertilizer should be applied as needed. A soil test will indicate best the type and amount of fertilizer needed.

MANAGEMENT

Rescuegrass responds to good grazing management. The rapid growth obtained under good conditions may be utilized best with a rotation grazing system. Concentrating relatively large numbers of animals on small blocks insures a high degree of utilization in addition to providing rest for the blocks not being grazed. Rescue can utilize 30 pounds of actual nitrogen each time it is grazed down, if the soil has adequate moisture, phosphate and potash. Where volunteer stands are expected, the proper application of fertilizer should be put down before the plants emerge. If the grass is grown in a Bermuda sod, the rescue should be grazed or mowed down at the time the Bermuda should start spring growth to avoid damage to the sod.

Average yields of air dry forage from cool-season grasses at College Station, Denton and Kirbyville.

Grass	College Station ¹	Denton ²	Kirbyville ³
Texas Rescue 46	4630	3480	1985
Italian ryegrass	-	3670	2545
Oats	4520	3560	3065
Ky. 31 Fescue	2860	3240	1355

1. 1949-50 growing season - upland
2. 1948-49 growing season
3. 2-year average - 1949-50 and 1950-51 seasons

Over 1100 pounds of rescue seed per acre have been harvested by the Experiment Station. Seed yields average 300 to 500 pounds per acre. Seed may be harvested directly from the standing plants with a combine, but the seed will have to be carefully dried. Windrowing for drying and then threshing may give best results. Because the seed shatter at maturity, harvesting should be done a little ahead of that time. The 1948 Yearbook of Agriculture reports rescue seed to have an average purity of 95 percent and an 85 percent average germination.

PASTURES ARE A CASH CROP - TREAT THEM AS SUCH

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

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