

Grass

Sorghum-sudangrass

Sorghum bicolor x Sorghum bicolor var. Sudanense



PLANT HARDINESS ZONE 6 DATASET

COVER CROP DESCRIPTION

Also known as: Sudex, Sudax. Excellent summer grass choice. Plant in early summer; does not tolerate cool soils. Fast-grower that reaches 6-12 ft tall, big biomass potential in the presence of lots of soil N. Regrows well after mowing/grazing. Excellent subsoiler with thicker roots than most grasses. Excellent weed suppressor due to competition and allelopathy (caution if next crop is small-seeded). Good forage, but prussic acid and nitrate content can be a problem. Slow drydown will limit dry hay production; chop or wrap for forage. Improved forage types available, cultivars may vary widely. Can produce large amount of biomass; mow or kill in a timely fashion. Can substitute forage sorghum or sudangrass. Mixes well with cowpea and sunn hemp to create a diverse warm-season mixture.



Sorghum Sudangrass - Larson [2020]



Sorghum Sudangrass - Larson [2020]

GOALS

Growing Window	Short	Penetrates Plow Pan	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Nitrogen Scavenging	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Reduces Surface Compaction	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Lasting Residue	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Improve Soil Organic Matter	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Prevent Fall Soil Erosion	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Increase Soil Aggregation	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Prevent Spring Soil Erosion	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Good Grazing	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Forage Harvest Value	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Pollinator Food	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

WEEDS

Residue Suppresses Summer Annual Weeds	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Outcompetes Summer Annual Weeds	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Suppresses Winter Annual Weeds	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Persistence	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Volunteer Establishment	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ENVIRONMENTAL TOLERANCES

Low Fertility	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Drought	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Heat	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Shade	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Flood	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Salinity	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

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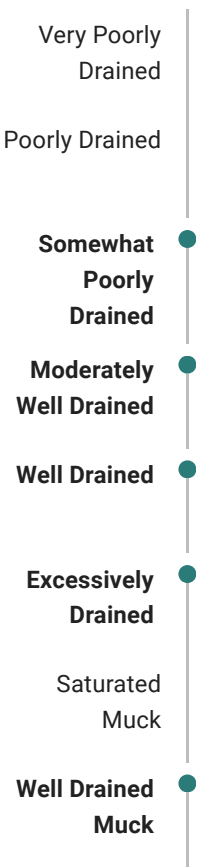


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Growth Traits

Duration	Annual
Zone Use	Common
Shape And Orientation	Erect
Dry Matter (Lbs/A/Yr)	4000 - 8000
Soil Texture	Coarse
	Medium
	Fine
Soil pH	6 - 8
Soil Moisture Use	High
Hessian Fly Free Date?	No
Ease Of Establishment	
Establishes Quickly	
Early Spring Growth	
Flowering Trigger	Plant Size
Root Depth	Medium

Soil Drainage



Planting

Seeds Per Lb	15000
Seed Price Per Lb	\$ \$ \$
Base Seeding Rate (Lbs/A)	15 - 35
Drilled Depth	0.5" - 1.5"
Can Aerial Seed?	No
Can Frost Seed?	No
Min Germination Temp (°F)	65

Termination

Tillage At Vegetative	
Tillage At Flowering	
Freezing At Vegetative	
Freezing At Flowering	
Chemical At Vegetative	
Chemical At Flowering	
Mow At Flowering	
Roller-Crimp At Flowering	



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Planting and Growth Windows

Frost Seeding	N/A
Reliable Establishment	05/15 - 07/31
Temperature/Moisture Risk	05/01 - 05/15
Active Growth Period	Summer
Winter Survival	Never
Can Interseed	N/A



Extended Comments

Forage and Grazing: Excellent forage; not as winterhardy as other perennial forage grasses but establishes quickly so may still be useful as a cover crop.

Weeds: Mature, frost-killed plants become quite woody

Nematodes: Supports reproduction of some root-knot nematode species/races.

References & Resources

Pasture Production of Selected Forage Species, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension
Cover Crops and Green Manures (New England Vegetable Management Guide), University of Massachusetts Extension
Late Season Cover Crops, University of Massachusetts Extension
Cover Cropping for Success, University of Maine Cooperative Extension
Using Green Manures, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Selected Green Manures and Cover Crops for Maine, University of Maine
Sudangrass and Sorghum-Sudangrass, Cornell University Cooperative Extension