

Elstel Farm & Seeds

“The Crabgrass Seed Folks”

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Fact Sheet 2009 & Seed List (Page 2)

Miscellaneous Management Items

Variety Summary: We have seed of two named varieties of Crabgrass available. They are: The original first known variety, “Red River Crabgrass” ,and the newer variety, “Quick-N-Big Crabgrass”. Red River Crabgrass was released from our work at Noble Foundation as a Certified Seed variety in 1988, and Quick-N-Big Crabgrass was first released from our farm in 2006, and later approved as a Certified Seed Variety in 2008. All our Certified Seed is grown under the guidelines and inspections of the Oklahoma Crop Improvement Association.

Red River Crabgrass(RRCG) is a very productive ecotype of crabgrass from the species *Digitaria ciliaris* (one of many common or native species of crabgrass). It is a medium stem and leaf size, and can grow to three feet tall at advanced hay stages under good conditions. But, RRCG is usually grazed and hayed at earlier stages of growth. It covers the soil surface very well with tillers and stolons (runners that can produce upright stems) that root from the nodes (joints) that lay on the soil surface in thinner stands that allow that to happen. RRCG was selected from a collection of many crabgrass ecotypes “native” to Oklahoma and other states. It was the most productive, and had among the longest of seasonal growth of all of those selections.

Quick-N-Big (QNB) is an equal to or more productive crabgrass than RRCG under good management. In research work it averaged about 11 % better than RRCG , with one year 25% better yield. It is from the species *Digitaria aegyptica*, and is a medium to large stem and **very large leaf** type (some measuring $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide) compared to RRCG. Under comparable cases, QNB germinates **quicker**, has **more rapid seeding growth** especially after tillers form, and **reaches grazing and hay stages** much earlier than RRCG. It is a taller plant than RRCG at similar ages, etc. QNB has been measured to average up to about 43 inches tall at advanced hay stages, with some areas free standing at 56 inches tall. This shows some of it’s genetic capability. QNB is a bit more open type than RRCG. The original seed that lead to QNB came from a seed source in Russia via a researcher friend in New Zealand. The actual point of first origin is not known.

QUICK-N-BIG CRABGRASS IS A PROPRIETARY VARIETY OF ELSTEL FARM AND SEEDS. SEED IS AVAILABLE ONLY FROM ELSTEL FARM AND SEEDS AND COOPERATING DEALERS.

During 2008 we did a little “country research” with QNB. It can have a more open canopy than RRCG. We wondered how many tillers (stems) it would make if given the space and the chance. A six foot diameter area was kept clean around a single QNB plant to let it grow at will. The field was dryland. The first half of summer had good moisture and the last half was dry for most of the time. The crop was fertilized with 60-26-0 lbs/ac fertilizer in April. We did not fertilize again for a fall crop. So the plant was somewhat nutrient deficient from mid-summer to fall. The first cutting was on July 14. That harvest produced 99 main stems from this one plant, plus 3 auxillary stems (sprouts at the joints) per main stem for a total of 396 stems. The September 5 harvest added 88 main stems as regrowth, plus uncounted auxillary stems , for a summer total of 484 stems from one plant. **Each stem is livestock feed.** Bottom line is, that is a lot of production from one plant and is an example of it’s genetic production capability .

Both varieties are good choices. Some producers mix the two in an effort to capture the benefits of both .

Some comments about “ common” or “native” crabgrasses: These grasses are “Variety Unstated” natural growing crabgrasses of many species, and innumerable plant types per species. They are whatever “Mother Nature” produces that might get tall enough to harvest. For example, there are six species of natural crabgrass in Oklahoma alone, and enormous plant variation within each species. Some may be a somewhat useful type, but in general they are inferior for forage relative to either of the developed , known potential, varieties. They tend to be less productive, and often have shorter growing seasons in spring, fall, or both. We do not produce or handle these crabgrasses, because we know they are somewhat unpredictable and inferior for forage crabgrass.

Some Management Reminders: For upper level performance, these crabgrass variety forages need: soil surface renovation sometime annually during the off-season, acceptable fertilization, weed control, proper grazing rotations, proper timing and height of hay harvests and grazings, and they are useful in numerous double cropping, and forage mixture situations. For those producers that can produce pasture legumes well, it is wise to grow RRCG and QNB with a legume in mixture or during the prior winter season. This can help reduce some of the fertilizer needed .

Other Fact Sheets : We have 12 other free Fact Sheets on request. These deal with a range of subjects: establishment techniques, fertilization, hay management, double-cropping, mixtures, etc.

2009 Seed List (All Certified Seed)

Seed Variety & Lot	Pure Live Seed Price/lb. FOB Ardmore,OK	
Red River Crabgrass -- <u>New Crop</u>	\$5.50	<u>Call For</u>
Red River Crabgrass -- <u>AGED</u>	\$6.00	<u>Price</u>
		<u>Updates</u>
Quick-N-Big -- <u>New Crop</u>	\$5.50	<u>& Dealer</u>
Quick-N-Big -- <u>AGED</u>	\$6.50	<u>Discounts</u>

If you need other seeds, we can refer you to a cooperating dealer for the seeds.

