Upper Murray Seeds®
Sow much better

Tropical Pasture Guide

Our business is growing yours

AUSTRALIAN GROWN

Australian Seed Federation
SOWING SEEDS

UMS Tropical Pasture Guide

Our story

Meet Upper Murray Seeds

Upper Murray Seeds is a growing Australian agribusiness built on solid foundations and sound values. We're a privately-owned company established in 1993 by Directors, Stewart and Kate Sutherland, and we've been growing around the country ever since.

As a national wholesale business, UMS works hard to provide a professional and competitive service to rural resellers around Australia, however we place great value on the personal relationships developed with our client base.

We've built our reputation on providing the quality seed products and solutions needed to boost on-farm productivity for farmers located across Australia.

With branches in southern QLD and northern NSW, tropical pasture seed is a natural extension of our product offering. Our experienced team can help you with advice and recommendations to optimise product performance.

Sow much better.

Cover: Premier Digit
Page 2: Rhodes Grass
Page 3: Black Stallion Cow Peas

DISCLAIMER: All information provided is intended as a guide only. Upper Murray Seeds has taken all due care to ensure the included information is accurate and use of this information is at the user's sole discretion and risk. Varying environmental conditions may alter the performance of products and plants. The sowing rates provided are a guide only. You should refer to your agronomist or advisor for sowing rates suited to your particular situation.

1st Edition, July 2020

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Getting the best from tropical pasture

Upper Murray Seeds has a wide selection of tropical legume, grass and pasture species available to suit your specific conditions.

This guide has been designed to assist you in finding the right pasture mix that best suits your land and livestock. When selecting seed, it is important to consider the objectives of your enterprise, as well as factoring in:

- Soil test results
- Sowing methods
- Type of stock you're running
- Grazing patterns
- Feed demand
- Local topography
- Rainfall patterns

Custom mixing is also available on all seed types. Speak to your UMS Area Manager about the right mix to optimise production in your local area.

Green Panic Grass.

Your 8-step guide to success

Power your production with proper preparation, establishment and management.

Productive tropical pasture stands can be achieved by following a couple of key rules prior to and post-sowing seed. The following notes are a guide to the principles that have helped growers in many districts develop their country thus leading to improved pastures, better performing paddocks, all of which boosts their bottom line.

Step 1. Paddock preparation

The initial focus for planting a tropical pasture is to select the cleanest and most productive paddock that may be suited to growing such species. There is no point in trying to grow the most expensive grass on the wrong paddock. Implement a 2-3 year cereal phase, this is aimed at reducing weed burdens using both chemical controls and highly competitive varieties of oats, barley or wheat.

Black Stallion Cow Peas, Northern NSW.

Herbicide control options within these key cereal varieties provide the opportunity to control hard to kill weed species. Speak with your agronomist about spray options to control grass weeds over previous summer periods, as in some cases three sprays may be required to control varieties such as Barnyard Grass.

Weed competition is a major cause of tropical pasture failure, so understanding the weed-burden in intended paddocks is the key to controlling problem weeds. Be careful with some chemical withholding periods, spraying too close to sowing can injure tropical seedlings. Fallow the paddock and keep it weed free.

Step 2. Soil health check

As with any new enterprise it is imperative that you know what your soil nutrition levels are by testing the soil. On previously cropped country this is a very important factor due to crop nutritional use and residual fertiliser from previous years' operations. This step allows you to know where you are starting from.

Soil testing informs you about what is required to bring nutrition up to an optimum level for growing tropical species. This critical preparatory step allows adjustments to be made before you invest in the seed and provides time for soil ameliorants to take effect.

Step 3. Tailor varieties to your area

Take a drive around your area, look at your neighbour's tropical paddocks and determine what is suited to the region – but bear in mind that what works for one person does not mean the variety will grow in your paddock. If in doubt, start with a small plot to see what will grow in your patch.

Your soil test should give an indication of the texture and type of soil you have: eg heavy, light, sandy, clay or a mix of everything. Armed with this information you can choose varieties suited both to the area and soil type.

Seek advice from your agronomist if necessary, however as a general guide, a mixed grass and legume stand will provide improved pasture quality with good protein for growing animals.

Step 4. Plant on good soil moisture

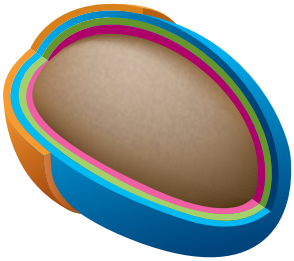
As a general rule (and if possible) always plant on good soil moisture and with a rising soil temperature of 16 degrees (always a good idea to consult with your agronomist). Plan for good rainfall four weeks following emergence to provide growing moisture for the secondary root development of seedlings. Reducing weed competition can make better use of available moisture.

It is imperative to check your soil nutrient levels.

Step 5. Use quality seed and treatment

Always remember that if you plant good quality seed there is a greater chance of stand success. This 'rule of thumb' also relates to coating seed which helps to protect seed from insect removal and wind disturbance. Coated seed has the added benefit of ballistic capability – giving the seed weight to move through sowing equipment without bridging or blocking up in sowing gear.

Some tropical species are 'feather-light' and blow easily on the wind. As an effective insurance policy, we recommend UMS SupaCote® seed treatment to protect your investment in seed. The improved ballistic properties of SupaCote® treated seed means it is suitable for aerial sowing from either helicopter or plane.



*SupaCote® helps protect seed from pests, improves germination and enhances plant growth. SupaCote® is made up of **Apron** (a fungicide) and **Gaucho** (an insecticide) which are encapsulated with a protective layer. Ask your agronomist or UMS Area Manager for more information.*

Step 6. Planting depth

Tropical grass species are sensitive to sowing depth and nearly all failures occur due to this factor. Most existing sowing equipment is set up for the sowing depth that suits oats or barley and will need to be recalibrated or modified to suit the tropical seed size and planting method.

Sowing too deep usually results in poor establishment. Aim to plant varieties at less than 1cm deep or take the boots off existing drill equipment and lightly harrow/roll the seed in.

Verano Stylo

Step 7. Grazing management

Tropical species should be fully anchored by mature root systems before they are grazed. Young plants should only be grazed lightly to encourage tillering, ie stimulating growth without destroying the growing points of grasses.

In their first year, the newly sown paddocks should be rested and allowed to set seed to aid in regeneration. Hay production is not recommended in first year as this tends to reduce stand density.

Step 8. Topdressing with fertiliser

It is generally recommended to topdress tropical pastures with nitrogen-based fertiliser following grazing because nutrients will have been transported to other paddocks, or off farm, in the form of meat produced. Always aim to replace and build on what nutrients have been used within plant and animal production systems.

Tropical grasses

LEGEND
● Poor ●● Fair ●●● Good ●●●● Very Good

	Characteristics			Tolerances		
Variety	**Sowing Rate**	**Rainfall**	**Soil Type**	**Drought**	**Frost**	**Waterlogging**
BLUEGRASS						
Bisset Bluegrass Hardy with good drought and grazing tolerance. Creeping in habit. A widely used pasture species.	3-15 kg/ha	600mm	Light/ Medium	●●●	●●	●
BRACHIARIA/UROCHLOA						
Signal Grass Leafy, perennial grass for high rainfall regions in northern Australia. Responds well to nitrogen, making Signal Grass ideal for beef cattle finishing.	4-10 kg/ha	800mm	Light/ Heavy	●●	●	●●
BUFFEL						
Biloela Buffel Hardy and productive subtropical grass widely used in northern Australia. Utilised in friable clay soil types.	4-15 kg/ha	300mm	Medium/ Heavy	●●●●	●	●
Gayndah/USA Buffel Hardy and productive subtropical grass widely used in northern Australia.	4-15 kg/ha	300mm	Light/ Medium	●●●●	●	●
DICANTHIUM						
Floren Bluegrass Can be established in cracking-clay soil types. Good performer in summer rainfall areas. Also tolerant of drought, flood and mild salt.	3-15 kg/ha	600mm	Light/ Heavy	●●●	●●	●●●
DIGITARIA						
Premier Digit Hardy, productive, tufted perennial grass that establishes well in sandy loams to medium clays. Well suited to inland regions of QLD and north western NSW.	4-15 kg/ha	500mm	Light/ Medium	●●●●	●●	●

Tropical grasses

	Characteristics			Tolerances		
Variety	Sowing Rate	Rainfall	Soil Type	Drought	Frost	Waterlogging
LOVE GRASS						
Consol Persistent, perennial grass for light sandy soils. Used as a binder in revegetation. Not highly sought after by stock.	4-15 kg/ha	350mm	Light	●●●	●●	●
PANIC GRASS						
Bambatsi Generally used in beef grazing systems in sub-tropics. Suited to fertile, medium to light clay soil types. Erect in habit, it is an excellent companion to pasture legumes.	3-15 kg/ha	500mm	Medium/ Heavy	●●●●	●●	●●●
Gatton/Green Generally used in beef grazing systems in sub-tropics. Suited to sand, loam and medium to light clay soils. Erect in habit, it is an excellent companion to other pasture grasses and legumes. Green Panic has good shade tolerance.	3-15 kg/ha	650mm	Medium/ Light	●●	●●	●
PASPALUM						
Paspalum dilatatum Grazing-tolerant perennial grass used in grazing systems. Suited to fertile alluvial soils in high rainfall sub-tropical regions.	3-10 kg/ha	750mm	Medium/ Light	●●	●●●	●●●
Wettsteninii Grazing-tolerant perennial grass used in grazing systems. Suited to fertile alluvial soils in high rainfall sub-tropical regions.	4-7 kg/ha	800mm	Medium/ Light	●●●	●●	●●
RHODES GRASS						
Callide Used in fertile, high rainfall environments. It is a productive tetraploid pasture species suited to warmer northern climates. Moderately tolerant to salt.	5-20 kg/ha	650mm	Light/ Medium	●●	●●	●●

Tropical grasses

	Characteristics			Tolerances		
Variety	Sowing Rate	Rainfall	Soil Type	Drought	Frost	Waterlogging
RHODES GRASS						
Katambora A fast-establishing, stoloniferous perennial pasture species with moderate salt tolerance. It is used widely in grazing systems and hay production and is also suitable for soil erosion control.	2-20 kg/ha	650mm	Light/ Medium	●●	●●	●●
SETARIA						
Narok/Solander/Splenda Hardy perennials suited to coastal regions. Can withstand cold conditions and light frosts. Mostly used in beef grazing systems.	3-15 kg/ha	800mm	Medium	●●	●●●	●●●●
Purple Pigeon Summer-growing perennial grass with good drought tolerance. Well suited to inland brigalow soil types of western QLD and north western NSW.	4-15 kg/ha	600mm	Heavy	●●●●	●●	●●●
UROCHLOA						
Sabi Grass Tussocking low summer-growing perennial grass utilised in beef grazing systems in tropical environments.	3-15 kg/ha	500mm	Light/ Heavy	●●●	●	●●

Tropical legumes

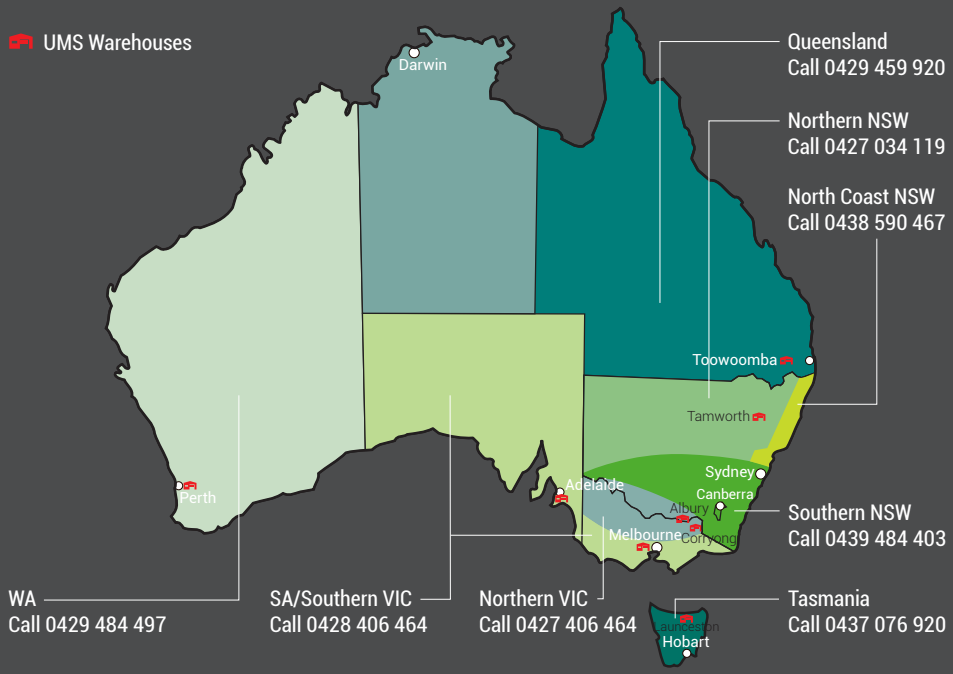
	Characteristics			Tolerances		
Variety	Sowing Rate	Rainfall	Soil Type	Drought	Frost	Waterlogging
PERENNIAL LEGUMES						
Aztec Atro Highly palatable, summer-active twining legume suitable for grazing, hay and silage in warm climates with high rainfall.	2-6 kg/ha	650mm	Light/ Heavy	●●●	●●	●
Butterfly Pea Semi-twining, summer-active legume suitable for grazing in warm climates.	4-10 kg/ha	550mm	Medium/ Heavy	●●●	●	●●
Burgundy Bean Highly palatable, summer-active, twining legume suitable for grazing, hay and silage with good cold weather drought tolerance.	3-5 kg/ha	400mm	Light/ Heavy	●●●	●●	●●
Marc Desmanthus Summer-active perennial legume with good drought tolerance. Well suited to inland brigalow soil types of western QLD and north western NSW.	2-5 kg/ha	500mm	Medium/ Heavy	●●●	●●	●
Seca Stylo Erect perennial legume, shrubby in appearance. Can persist under intense grazing conditions. Grows well in lighter, acidic, sandy soils.	2-6 kg/ha	500mm	Light	●●●●	●	●●
Verano Stylo Persistent, erect summer-growing legume, shrubby in appearance. Well adapted to tropics and warmer regions of the sub-tropics.	3-7 kg/ha	600mm	Light	●●●	●	●
Wynn Cassia Prostrate to semi-erect, short-lived summer growing legume. High seed set and it is self-regenerating.	2-5 kg/ha	625mm	Medium/ Light	●●●●	●●	●

Tropical legumes

	Characteristics			Tolerances		
Variety	Sowing Rate	Rainfall	Soil Type	Drought	Frost	Waterlogging
ANNUAL LEGUMES						
Rongai Lab Lab Fast growing very late maturing annual/biannual summer forage legume. Also suitable for silage and green manure break crops.	10-50 kg/ha	600mm	Light/ Medium	●●●	●	●
Highworth Lab Lab Fast growing late maturing annual/biannual summer forage legume. Highworth Lab Lab is an earlier maturing option to Rongai Lab Lab. Highworth is also used in silage and green manure break crops.	10-50 kg/ha	600mm	Light/ Medium	●●●	●	●
Buff/Red Caloona/Ebony/ Black Stallion Cow Peas Fast growing twining annual legume. Use as summer forage, hay, silage or in green manure crops. Well suited to areas with summer rainfall. Cow Peas improve soil fertility though nitrogen fixation.	10-40 kg/ha	600mm	Light/ Medium	●●●	●	●

Forage sorghum

	Characteristics			Tolerances		
Variety	Sowing Rate	Rainfall	Soil Type	Drought	Frost	Waterlogging
FORAGE SORGHUM						
Silk Sorghum Fast growing tussocking perennial. Mostly used in cattle production systems as a component in short term perennial pasture blends. Can also be used as cover for slower establishing perennial grasses.	1-10 kg/ha	500mm	Light/ Heavy	●●●	●	●



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