

PRODUCT DATA SHEET

Cocksfoot

Botanical name	Dactylis glomerata
Seeding rate	20-25 kg/ha with a thousand grain weight of 0.7-1.5 g
Distance between rows	Row planting similar to cereals possible (if necessary, two passes with half the seed amount each), well-suited to narrow row planting using a slice seeder (especially for resowing)
Sowing period	Early-mid March to late August
Sowing depth	1-2 cm



Botany

- Family: Poaceae (grasses)
- Genus: Cocksfoot grasses
- Origin: Europe and western Asia
- Perennial, highly persistent, competitive tuft-forming tall grass species with a long establishment period, suited to pasture sites with medium to intense usage
- Earliest ripening of any grass species after meadow foxtail, suitable for cutting and pasture
- Due to its resistance to drought and cold weather, it makes an ideal partner in alfalfa and clover mixtures for permanent pastures on dry sites
 - Reliable germination rates can be obtained within about a week with Coated Seed technology and sufficiently high average temperatures
 - MehrGras 400 (40% cocksfoot) and MehrGras 1000 (15% cocksfoot) are mixtures suited to permanent pastures on dry sites

- A variety of differentiating factors are present between cocksfoot varieties, including:

... **Growth habit** (low-growing varieties are better suited to grazing due to their low tendency to displace slower-growing low grasses)

... Resistance to diseases

- As a high-performance tall grass, it can bear intensive use, fertilisation, trampling and grazing
 - Highest yields observed on prime locations with good pasture soils and sufficient soil moisture
- With a fodder rating of 7, it is particularly easy to digest for ruminants, though the fodder quality (digestibility, energy, protein and sugar content) falls dramatically in later cuts due to rapid lignification and physiological ageing, while raw fibre content rises considerably

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Morphology

Leaf base	Folded
Lamina	Not grooved Strong leaf shoot
Leaf node	Long cuticle No auricles
Inflorescence	1 spikelet per attachment point
Other features	Base onion-like

Climate requirements

- Moderately dry sites with up to 500 mm of precipitation per year are suitable for cultivation
- Not sensitive to cold
- Relatively shade tolerant

Soil requirements

- Nutrient-rich, deep, loamy and clayey soils are preferred, though cultivation is also possible on shallower soils in transition and low mountain areas
- Waterlogged soils are not suitable

Soil preparation

- Due to the slow early growth, cocksfoot and mixtures with cocksfoot are considerable better for new cultivation than for reseeding

Objective	New cultivation
Measures	Soil preparation (primary preparation) with plough for neat cultivation.
	Secondary processing using a mill or rotary harrow for a fine, well-distributed seedbed.



Crop protection

Fighting weeds

- Prior to preparing the soil for new cultivation, consider using herbicide if there are major pre-existing weed issues
- Topping as an effective measure against growing weeds at heights of 10-15 cm
- Prevent weeds from expanding and dispersing their seeds via mowing
- Due to their toxic effects, unwanted weeds like the marsh horsetail, stinking willie, meadow buttercup and sorrel and thistle species should be removed using mechanical means or chemicals that target individual plants

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Fertilisation

- Soil fertilisation based on a soil assessment
- N requirement: 190 kg N/ha for 3-cut cultivation and 245 kg N/ha when used in four-cut systems (note current fertiliser regulations!)
 - Minimum reductions of 10-50 kg N/ha for soils with > 4% humus content
 - Reduction of 20 kg N/ha when legumes comprise 5-10% of yield
- Nutrient loss for 3-4 cuts per year:

	Total N	P ₂ O ₅	K ₂ O	CaO	MgO
Total	190-245	89-104	268-364	104-138	33-46

Harvest and treatment

- Cutting can be done between late April and late October
 - First cut at the end of development stage 4 (BBCH stage 4 = boot stage) - just before inflorescence emerges
- Fodder yields: approx. 8,000 kg DM/ha with 3 cuts and 10,000-11,000 kg DM/ha with 4 cuts
- Optimal cutting height: 7 cm



Any questions? Please feel free to contact us!

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