



## Eastern Gamagrass

**EASTERN GAMAGRASS** is a native, warm-season, perennial tall grass. The grass grows in large clumps from 1 to 4 feet in diameter, that spread by thick, knotty rhizomes and from seeds. The plant itself will grow to heights of 3 to 9 feet. Nicknamed the "granddad" of the grasses of the eastern United States, **EASTERN GAMAGRASS** has most often been found on a variety of soils in low areas. Because it is highly palatable to livestock, more growers are including **EASTERN GAMAGRASS** in mixtures with other warm-season grasses or are planting it in pure stands for hay production.

### FACTS ABOUT EASTERN GAMAGRASS

- Eastern Gamagrass grows best in low areas or areas that can be irrigated.
- Eastern Gamagrass does not grow well on alkali soils.
- On wet, deep meadows it grows in association with Big Bluestem and Switchgrass.
- Seeds of Eastern Gamagrass are large, requiring a grain drill for planting.
- Eastern Gamagrass tends to begin spring growth earlier than other common, warm-season grasses.
- Cattle particularly like Eastern Gamagrass, so grazing must be monitored to avoid killing the stand.
- Eastern Gamagrass is fairly flood tolerant, making it a good choice for flood prone areas.



## **VARIETIES:**

Several varieties are being developed at this time. None have yet been released for seed production.

## **ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT:**

Despite many attributes, **EASTERN GAMAGRASS** has not become a popular forage crop. The main problem has been a high cost of establishment due to seed quality and quantity deficiencies. With a prechilling process lasting about 6 weeks, germination rates are around 65%. Seedbeds should be clean tilled or standing dead mulch. A corn row planter is suggested for planting. Seeds may be planted in the fall (November 1 through December 31) or in the spring if the seeds have been prechilled. A planting depth of one inch is recommended. Currently no preemergent herbicides are approved for use with **EASTERN GAMAGRASS**, therefore planting in rows with cultivation to control competition is needed, at least until the stand is established.

After the stand is established, **EASTERN GAMAGRASS** responds well to applications of nitrogen to promote growth. Cool-season grass and broad-leafed weeds can be controlled by burning and cultivation. For maximum hay yield cut to eight inches high during the first week of June, July and August. For grazing, rotate pastures to allow 21 days regrowth, and maintain an eight inch height. Allow the fields to stand dormant after August 15 to replenish root reserves for the winter months. **CONTACT YOUR SHARP BROTHERS SEED COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.**

