



Pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum*)

Of millet varieties, this is most commonly used as a cover crop in row crop production. The brown midrib varieties may be more susceptible to disease. There is a difference between grain and forage varieties in terms of biomass. In general, forage varieties are better for cover crops.

Recommended Varieties

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
Tifleaf 3	Early maturing variety with good biomass. 70 – 75 days to maturity.	UGA Forages
SS-635	Forage variety that has performed well in Georgia forage variety trials.	UGA Forages
Prime 180, Leafy 22	Forage pearl millets that have performed well at the Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center. Prime 180 is brown midrib dwarf variety and has a lower lignin content.	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data

Planting Information

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (inches)	¼ - ¾	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	10 - 12	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	12 - 15 Check with your state’s wildlife resources department to ensure compliance with dove hunting regulations if fields will be hunted.	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Aerial Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	N/A Not recommended.	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool

Termination Information

Information	Source
Pearl millet can be terminated by mowing, herbicides or tillage. It will winterkill but not before it sets seeds. Pearl millet is photosensitive and will quickly go to seed even if planted late in the summer.	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool; Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
Pearl millet is attractive to migrating birds. Check with your state’s wildlife resources department to ensure compliance with dove hunting regulations if fields will be hunted.	
Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations. Always follow the herbicide label.	

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Cultural Traits

Traits	Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	5,000 - 15,000	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	0	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Life Cycle	Summer annual grass	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Growth Habit	Upright	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Preferred Soil pH	5.5 - 6.5	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Relative Seed Cost (\$/acre)	\$\$\$	Based on survey of seed costs using maximum price and max seeding rate
Min. Germination Temp (F)	65°	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Cautions	Drought conditions or high nitrogen soils can cause nitrate accumulation that is dangerous for grazing. Check with your state's wildlife resources department to ensure compliance with dove hunting regulations if fields will be hunted.	

Sources:

Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center Annual Reports:

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ga/plantsanimals/?cid=nrcs144p2_022076

Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool - Missouri Data: <http://mccc.msu.edu/covercroptool/infosheet.php>

UGA Forages: <http://georgiaforages.com/species/pearlmillet.html>