

Sorghum-sudangrass hybrids grow 4-7 feet tall and can put on very high biomass compared to other summer annuals. They are known to help loosen compacted soils with strong penetrating root systems. They can be used for grazing or silage, and are therefore applicable to dual use applications. This cover crop is not recommended for hay cutting, however, as it dries slowly. This cover crop does very well in hot temperatures and is adapted to alkaline Blackland soils.

Recommended Varieties

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
Planter's Pride (brand)	Conventional three-way hybrid	Personal communication
Planter's Pride (brand) Plus	Non photo-period sensitive, will continue to increase biomass due to delayed maturity.	
Planter's Pride (brand) 2000	Photo-period sensitive genetics prevent heading out. Boasts large root system	

Planting Information

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (Inches)	15-20	Plant April 1 - June 1
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	1-2"	Texas A&M AgriLife
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	20-25	
Aerial Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	N/A	No information available

Termination Information

Information	Source
Can be cut, mowed, or terminated with atrazine.*	Texas A&M AgriLife
Can be cut as green chop or silage, while leaving some biomass for green manure	
Will winter kill, many varieties are photosensitive and stop producing vegetative mass as the days get shorter in September.	
*Always follow herbicide labels for crop to be terminated and for compatibility with subsequent crop(s). Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations.	

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Cultural Traits

Traits		Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	4,000-5,000	Much higher total biomass accumulation has been measured when multiple cuttings occur.	SARE
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	Negligible	Can tie up nitrogen for the following crop. Interplanting with a legume or applying additional nitrogen are strategies to accommodate for this.	
Life Cycle	Warm season annual		
Growth Habit	Upright, fine stem	Rapid regrowth after cutting	
Preferred Soil pH	5.0-9.0	Good choice for alkaline Blackland soils	
Relative Costs	\$	Seed is moderately priced, but biomass requires fertilization.	
Min. Germination Temp	60°F		
Cautions		Can accumulate nitrates during drought. If grazing or cutting hay near this time, have the forage tested for nitrates before feeding. <i>Special note:</i> If grazing horses in dual use applications, wait until plants are 24" or taller to avoid equine toxicity.	

Sources:

Texas A&M AgriLife:

<https://agrillifeextension.tamu.edu/library/ranching/warm-season-annual-forage-grasses-for-texas/>

Personal Communications with Blackland Farmers and Seed Suppliers.

SARE:

<https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books/Managing-Cover-Crops-Profitably-3rd-Edition/Text-Version/Nonlegume-Cover-Crops/Sorghum-Sudangrass>