

Pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum*)

Pearl millet is a good choice for a summer grain cover crop. Pearl millet suppresses many nematodes including lesion nematodes. The brown midrib varieties are not typically susceptible to many diseases in this geophysical region. There is a difference between grain and forage varieties in terms of biomass. In general, forage varieties are better for cover crops. Sometimes millet will be planted after an early spring vegetable is harvested to provide coverage until a fall crop is planted.

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	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool

Termination Information

Information	Source
Most vegetable farmers use mowing and incorporation for termination. Flail mowers provide the finest residue and most even distribution, but rotary mowers can be used. Small scale farmers can use weed-eaters on smaller beds. Residue should be incorporated as soon after mowing as possible. Leave at least 2 weeks for residue to decompose before planting. Decomposition is greater in moist, warm conditions. If the soil is dry then irrigation may be necessary. Cool soils conditions will lengthen time needed before planting.	University of Georgia; Clemson University
Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations. Always follow the herbicide label.	

Continue to next page...

Cultural Traits

Traits		Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	5,000 - 15,000	Higher rates when cover crop is mowed and allowed to regrow	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	Not available		
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			

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>