



Presto Burgundy bean

Macroptilium bracteatum

Tropical



400mm+



4.5–8.0



Light to heavy



AgriCote



PBR

Key features

- A hardy, non-bloating tropical legume
- Earlier maturing variety selected for shorter growing season environments
- Highly palatable – live weight gain of up to 1.0kg/head/day
- Recruits readily from seed for extended stand life under ideal management
- Greater autumn growth and cool season stay-green than previous varieties
- Versatile, suiting a wide range of soils including heavy clays
- Very drought tolerant
- Larger seed size aids in rapid establishment and improved persistence
- Nitrogen fixation
- Addresses soil fertility decline in cropping soils
- Mosaic virus resistant

Presto, a tropical legume from the *Macroptilium* family, is a high yielding, highly palatable legume. Suitable as a monoculture or in mixes, this species is well adapted to both grazing and high quality hay production. The non-bloating characteristic of Presto makes it an ideal choice for any animal production system. Presto burgundy bean is deep rooted, allowing the variety to be extremely drought tolerant. Being both an earlier maturing variety and having improved seed yielding ability allows the variety to regenerate well from both new seedlings and existing plants, greatly improving persistence. Presto burgundy bean is closely related to Siratro but is more cold tolerant than this species and is commonly referred to as the sub-tropical equivalent of the more tropical adapted butterfly pea.

Agronomy and management

Presto burgundy bean is well suited to tropical, sub-tropical and warmer temperate regions. Presto is suitable to a wide range of soil types from sandy loams to heavy clays, acid to alkaline. Best adapted to moderately heavy to heavy textured soils but will not tolerate prolonged waterlogging. It has been selected for its tolerance of the cooler growing regions, being capable of growing at lower temperatures than most other tropical and sub-tropical legumes, giving it a longer growing season. It will grow on into the late autumn, providing more palatable feed. Presto burgundy bean exhibits early season growth coming out of winter with exceptional 'bounce back' upon the commencement of warmer weather.

Establishment

The larger seed size of Presto assists with easy, rapid establishment. Seed should be planted when soil temperature exceeds 17 degrees Celsius. Seed can be drilled or broadcast and being a small seed, should be planted ideally at 5mm and no more than 1cm deep. Seed to soil contact is important and results can be varied with surface sown seed. The use of press wheels or, on non-hard setting soils rolling after sowing, will greatly improve germination and establishment by providing ample seed to soil contact. Follow up rain post planting is ideal. Care should be taken not to plant in the hottest summer weather without adequate moisture – the seed must maintain close contact with wet soil for about 3–4 days to establish a seedling. The use of AgriCote coated seed will greatly improve the establishment success of Presto burgundy bean.

Fertiliser/nutrition

The use of AgriCote coated seed ensures essential macro and micronutrients are immediately available to the seedling. Responds strongly to phosphorus, zinc and sulfur. Starter fertiliser (P and Zn) is recommended at sowing, banded away from the seed. Application of 10–20kg/ha P (eg. 100–200kg/ha of superphosphate) improves performance on old cropping soils. Molybdenum may also be necessary in some situations. Inoculating seed with a compatible rhizobia inoculant is vital for nitrogen fixation to facilitate plant requirements of nitrogen. The use of a soil test will form the foundation of a suitable fertiliser program.

Growth habit

Presto burgundy bean is an erect and trailing pubescent herbaceous perennial. It has a low growing crown and continually produce new shoots. The twining, 'vine like' nature of Presto make it ideal for tropical mixes with grasses. Presto has an indeterminate flowering habit, continuing to flower and set seed throughout the growing season.

Compatibility (with other species)

Presto burgundy bean performs extremely well in combination with grasses, including Rhodes grass, Buffels, Digitaria, Panic, Guinea grass, Brachiaria, Setaria, Bluegrasses and Millet. Combines well with other pasture legumes such as Siratro, Butterfly pea, Stylo, Glycine, Lucerne, Clover and Medic.

Persistence

Presto is a drought hardy, persistent perennial due to its robust root system, while the earlier flowering nature of this variety allows greater opportunity for Presto to set seed within the growing season. Presto has the ability to continually produce new shoots following grazing/cutting, regenerating from existing plants. Best regrowth is obtained when the crop is fully established due to its capacity to store food reserves in the roots.

Uses

Suitable for both grazing and/or hay production. It is also suited to weed or erosion control. Presto burgundy bean offers an alternative to lucerne, butterfly pea and summer forage legumes such as lablab.

Toxicity

Presto burgundy bean does not cause bloat. No record of toxicity in any livestock species. Ideal legume species for horse pastures.

Management

The success of a pasture will depend on grazing management in the first season. Presto burgundy bean is a short-lived perennial, relying on seedling recruitment for ongoing stand persistence beyond 2–3 years, such that older stands will become a mix of older crowns and newer seedlings. This variety will pod and seed readily, with pods that shatter and disperse seed up to several metres away from the parent plant. Due to its high palatability, management intervention may be required to ensure that the Presto burgundy bean has periodic opportunities to set seed, particularly in younger stands. Care must be taken in early developing stands to allow a hard seed bank to develop.

Suggested sowing rates (AgriCote coated seed)

Pasture mix (over-sow): 2–5kg/ha

Ideal dryland: 3–6kg/ha

Irrigated: 6–10kg/ha

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