

Finecut Rhodes Grass

Chloris gayana

Tropical grasses



500mm+



5.5-8.0



Wide range



AgriCOTE

AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes is a diploid (Katambora) type. A leafy, densely growing variety with long, relatively thin stolons. Late maturing variety with vigorous stolons (more stoloniferous than Callide Rhodes). Selected for its drought tolerance and very rapid growth rates. High spring and summer yields; showing excellent persistent under grazing systems.

AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes is suitable for hay production, establishes and covers rapidly and persists well, even at low fertility.

Key features

- Highly stoloniferous, versatile and earlier flowering than Callide
- Greater drought tolerance and ability to grow on lower fertility soils
- Withstands soil/moisture variations and periodic water logging
- Quick establishing diploid variety

Establishment

Recommended planting rates for AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes Grass are:

Sowing rates:	Marginal dryland (<i>Rangelands</i>)	5-7 kg/ha
	Good dryland (<i>Sub tropics</i>)	8-12 kg/ha
	Irrigated (<i>Tropic coastal</i>)	15-20 kg/ha

Seeds of AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes (Katambora, diploid types) have little or no post-harvest dormancy, while seed of the tetraploids (Callide) may not reach maximum germination for 3-6 months (sometimes up to 18 months) after harvest. Seed is best sown on the surface (no deeper than 1 cm) of a well-prepared seedbed, followed by rolling. The fluffy seed tends to "ball" or bridge when planting, therefore the use of AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes Grass seed is recommended for all planting applications (broadcasting, seed drills). Seed germinates in 1-7 days with seedlings develop rapidly.

Variety Management / Agronomy

Although AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes Grass can survive on infertile soil it is very unproductive and may eventually die out, particularly if grazed regularly. AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes responds to Phosphorus in poorer soils and gives a linear yield and crude protein response of up to 300 kg/ha of Nitrogen, if other nutrients are adequately supplied. Split applications, each of 50-100 kg/ha N, are normally used when economically feasible. AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes is very tolerant of cutting or grazing. The stand should be maintained in a leafy condition by regular cutting or grazing, since feeding value declines rapidly with onset of flowering. However, too frequent cutting or grazing (say every 14 days) leads to production losses and stand decline. Annual winter legumes are favoured by heavily grazing the pasture in late summer.

It makes good hay if cut at or just before very early flowering, giving up to 6, 25- to 50-day harvests.

Pest / Diseases Resistance

AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes Grass is used in pasture leys to reduce nematode populations in preparation for succeeding crops.

Insect pests include fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*), larvae of *Mocis latipes*, (both *Lepidoptera: Noctuidae*), the lesser corn-stalk borer (*Elasmopalpus lignosellus*), Rhodes Grass Scale or Rhodes Grass Mealybug (*Antonina graminis*), chinch bugs (*Hemiptera: Lygaeidae: Blissus spp.*) and the two-lined spittle bug (*Homoptera: Cercopidae: Prosapia bicincta*). Some of these can severely damage stands if conditions are suitable.

Performance

AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes Grass forms strong bunch-type stools; its runners rapidly cover the ground surface, anchoring at the nodes and producing plantlets. Its vigorous root system gives a degree of drought resistance, but it performs best in the 700 - 1,000 mm belt. This variety shows moderate frost tolerance, but is primarily a summer grower. It is quite versatile in its soil requirements, although it grows best on softwood scrub red loams and the stronger brigalow soils. Katambora (diploid) types are generally quite salt tolerant, and is one of the best grasses for sowing on earthworks. AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes will combine well with B1 Burgundy, Siratro, Stylo, Lotononis and Wynn Cassia in coastal/sub-coastal areas of higher rainfall and with lucerne in inland districts. Crude protein levels vary with age of regrowth and level of available soil nitrogen, from about 17% (on a DM basis) in very young leaf, to 3% in old leaves. Similarly, digestibility may vary from 80% in very young growth to 40% in older growth.

Animal Production

AgriCOTE Finecut Rhodes can carry about 1 - 4 beasts/ha depending on pasture productivity and size of animal. Annual live weight gains of up to 170 kg/head are achievable. Production levels decline without a vigorous legume or the use of fertiliser nitrogen.

Toxicity: None recorded.

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