



# Teff Crop Management Manual

## Benefits

- Palatable
- Fast growing
- High yield coupled with high quality
- Summer production
- Drought tolerant

Teff is a warm season annual summer grass which can be harvested multiple times during the growing season as hay, silage or pasture. As a fast-growing crop, Teff combines excellent forage quality with high yield during a relatively short growing season.

### Emergency forage

Teff is an excellent choice as an emergency crop when weather delays the timely seeding of grain crops. Or as a rescue crop, when perennials have failed.



## 1. Sowing

<b>Seeding period</b>	From late spring to mid-summer (after the risk of frost has passed).
<b>Seed bed</b>	Firm seed bed is absolutely critical.
<b>Soil temperature</b>	At least 16° C.
<b>Seeding depth</b>	Should not exceed 0.5 cm.
<b>Seeding rate</b>	20 kg/ha (coated seed).
<b>Seed to soil contact</b>	Good seed to soil contact is required.
<b>Sowing technique</b>	Use broadcast sowing to minimize weed establishment. If row planters are used, row-spacing should be very narrow (< 10 cm).
<b>Moisture</b>	Due to its small seed size, Teff cannot be planted deep into moisture.
<b>Irrigation</b>	Sprinkler irrigation is beneficial in broadcast plantings to aid emergence, if the seed is not rolled or packed after planting.



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## 2. Fertilization

<b>In general</b>	Teff is a low input crop, requiring minimal fertilization.
<b>Fertilization</b>	Both manure and artificial fertilizer can be applied.
<b>Nitrogen (N) First cutting</b>	Plantings may not need any additional nitrogen fertilization on the first cutting.
<b>Nitrogen (N) Single applications</b>	Excessive single applications of nitrogen above 110 kg/ha may result in lodging.
<b>Nitrogen (N) Multiple cut</b>	Multiple cut systems may require split applications of nitrogen (30 to 55 kg) following each cut throughout the growing season for maximum production.
<b>Nitrogen (N) Total seasonal</b>	Generally in the range of 55 to 100 kg of plant available nitrogen.
<b>Phosphorus (P) and Sulphur (S)</b>	Moderate amounts of phosphorous and in some cases sulphur may be required.

## 3. Weeds and pests control

<b>Pre-plant cultivation</b>	Can be effective, especially if Teff is planted immediately after cultivation.
<b>Broadleaf herbicide</b>	Growers should check with their local suppliers and follow all label instructions. If a broadleaf herbicide is applied, Teff should not be treated until the plant has at least 5 to 7 leaves.
<b>Natural resistance</b>	Following the initial root growth period, Teff grows very aggressive and can out-compete many weeds.

## 4. Harvesting

<b>Cutting height</b>	10 cm
<b>Moment of harvest</b>	Harvest should occur in early boot stage and prior to seed head appearance to ensure optimal forage quality and regrowth in subsequent cuts.
<b>Cutting</b>	Due to the fineness of its stems, Teff is one of the few annual forage crops that is suitable for making dry bales rather than having to ensile it.
<b>Cutting interval</b>	Generally 45 to 50 days for first cut and approximately 30 days for subsequent cuts; however this may vary by location. Cuts shouldn't be too heavy.
<b>Grazing</b>	Although best suited for haying operations, Teff can be grazed by cattle, horses and sheep. Avoid pasturing until the root system has developed, excess stocking rates and over-grazing.

