

# Olympia Offers Improved Orchardgrass Persistence and Durability

Farmers looking for a high-yielding and more grazing persistent orchardgrass now have an excellent new choice with the release of Pennington's "Olympia". Olympia emerged from the breeding program of renowned forage plant breeder Joe Bouton while at the University of Georgia. Dr. Bouton's goal was to develop an orchardgrass that would have improved grazing, heat and drought tolerance leading to greater stand persistence than varieties currently available in the market place. Olympia originated from a population of long-term surviving orchardgrass plants found in north-central Georgia pastures.

Olympia combines superior grazing tolerance with outstanding forage yield. "In university trials, Olympia had final stands greater than other orchardgrass varieties when continuously grazed," according to Chris Agee, Pennington Forage Products Manager. (See Table 2) "In Virginia yield trials, it performed at the top in 4 years of cutting data." (See Table 1)

Table 1  
2003-2004 Orchardgrass Variety Trial  
Northern Piedmont AREC, Orange, VA  
Planted April 2002

Variety	% Stand April '04	2 Year Avg. Yield Lbs. DM/A
Olympia	98	9460
Benchmark Plus	98	9280
Benchmark	98	9076
Teka Po	95	8586
WP 300	97	8440

Table 2  
Percent basal coverage of orchardgrass varieties continuously grazed at the NW Ga. Research and Education Ctr.- Calhoun, Ga. 2005-2009

Variety	Apr. 2009*
Olympia	52
Persist	37
Benchmark Plus	34
Benchmark	21
Potomac	20
Shiloh	8
Vision	2

\*% basal coverage within row

Planted Nov. 2004

Orchardgrass is a tall-growing, cool-season perennial bunchgrass that begins growth early in the spring and flowers in April and May. Fall growth is somewhat less than tall fescue, but with added fertility can approach that of tall fescue. It is compatible with many legumes (alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil, red and white clovers) and other grasses (perennial ryegrass, tall fescue). Orchardgrass is highly palatable and makes excellent quality hay and grazing. It can be used to overseed toxic fescue pastures to dilute the amount of toxins ingested and reduce the effects of fescue toxicosis in grazing animals.

Under traditional haying conditions, stands can be expected to last for several years. However, orchardgrass is not known for its persistence or toughness under grazing conditions. With Olympia, persistence and durability is significantly improved.

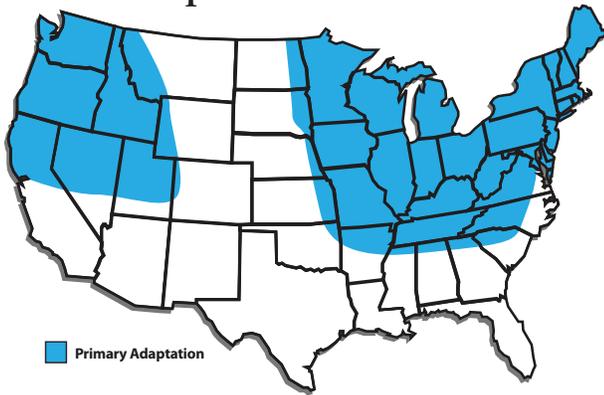


Olympia orchardgrass is marketed by Pennington Seed, Inc. Madison, Ga. For more information on this premium orchardgrass variety and its management or to find your nearest dealer, contact Pennington Seed, Inc. at 1-800-285-Seed or visit the Pennington website at [www.penningtonusa.com](http://www.penningtonusa.com).

Quality that Lasts  
**OLYMPIA**  
Orchardgrass

*Dactylis glomerata L.*

Where to plant:



**Type:** cool season perennial grass; medium-late maturity

**Adaptation:** Best suited to moderately well-drained to excessively drained soils and does well in mixtures with legumes such as alfalfa, red and white clover. Orchardgrass will not tolerate wet soils or prolonged flooding. Orchardgrass is tolerant of shade and more tolerant of heat and drought than perennial ryegrass, timothy, or Kentucky bluegrass, but less so than tall fescue.

**Uses:** Olympia orchardgrass can be grown for hay, green chop, silage, and pasture. Olympia combines superior grazing tolerance with outstanding forage yield. It is compatible with many legumes (alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil, red and white clovers) and other grasses (perennial ryegrass, tall fescue). Pure stands or simple mixtures (one grass and one legume) are easiest to manage.

**Nutrition:** With good management practices, orchardgrass can produce crude protein levels of 12 - 18%; Total Digestible Nutrients ranging from 65 - 68%. Results depend largely on maturity stage at harvest and fertility.

**Planting:** Rate: 15-20 lbs/acre drilled or broadcast.  
Date: August 15 - October 15; February 15 - April 15. Fall plantings are generally more successful than spring plantings particularly in the southern areas of adaptation.  
Depth: ¼ - ½ inch into a firm seedbed; a presswheel, cultipacker, or other soil-firming device will increase success.