

PLANTING GUIDE

Arachis glabrata Perennial peanuts

Description: Perennial peanuts are summer growing leguminous herbs which grow well as far north as Tifton, Georgia. They will grow with grasses and supply nitrogen to the soil. These peanuts grow to two and one-half feet in length but will ordinarily stand only 15-17 inches tall. They spread by underground stems (rhizomes). The above ground stems are single, erect, and arise from nodes on the underground stems. The foliage is similar to that of commercial peanuts, but becomes thicker and somewhat more leathery as the plants age. When frosted the foliage will die. These peanuts are propagated by use of rhizomes instead of seed. Underground peanuts are small and produce only very sparingly. Flowers are yellow to orange and do not produce seed.

Uses: Perennial peanuts can be used for legume and legume-grass pastures; forage, hay or silage; cover crops for erosion control in row crops and groves; stabilization of roadsides and engineering structures; and beautification in homes, parks and highways.

Cultivars: 'Florigraze' peanut: 'Florigraze' rhizomes are generally about one-eighth inch in diameter, but have been observed to be three-sixteenths inch or larger in diameter. Tap roots are produced from the base of rhizomes but none have been observed from continuing lateral rhizome development. Good top growth begins 1-2 weeks after the start of the summer rainy season and continues into the late summer and autumn months. Plant material is available commercially.

'Arbrook' peanut: 'Arbrook' rhizomes are 3-5 sixteenths inch in diameter and are sometimes noted at one-half inch or more thickness. New rhizomes develop central taproots. Additional taproots are produced in moderate number by the lateral rhizomes. These are produced singly at 8-10 inch intervals along the rhizome. Good top growth begins in mid March at Brooksville and has been noted to continue growth through the April and May drought periods. Continued growth is excellent through the summer and early autumn months.

Area of Adaptation: These plants are adapted to use on moderately well drained to well drained soils. Arbrook is better adapted to excessively drained soils than 'Florigraze'. Both varieties will do well throughout Florida; southern Georgia; and the coastal areas of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas; and throughout Puerto Rico.

Rate of Planting: Twenty to forty bushels of 'Florigraze' vegetative materials (rhizomes) per acre, sixty to eighty bushels of 'Arbrook' per acre.

Soil Preparation: The field should be thoroughly tilled and treated **with** preplant, pre-emergence herbicides. The herbicides are similar to those used for annual peanuts. Contact the County Agricultural Agent for herbicide recommendations.



Date of Planting: The best time to plant is the dormant season. Vegetative plant materials for plantings of cultivars are available from commercial vendors and the Brooksville PMC. Vegetative materials for plantings from the Brooksville PMC will be made in spring, up to 7 days before the average date of the last spring frost at the destination or the planting site.

Method of Planting: Rhizome materials freshly dug with a rhizome or sprig harvester are used for planting. Top growth materials are mowed and removed. Rhizomes are dug and planted in one of three ways:

- Sprigger - set depth at **3-4** inches and row width at 0.5 meters (20 inches) or 1.0 meter (40 inches), cultipack after planting.
- Disc - spread rhizomes uniformly over a loose surface and incorporate with a disc to a depth of **3-4** inches, cultipack after planting.
- Furrow - plow open a furrow 3-4 inches deep, place rhizomes end to end, close the furrow, cultipack after planting.

Good soil moisture conditions are required at planting time and during the establishment period.

Fertilizer: Apply fertilizer according to soil test recommendations. However, fertilizer should not be applied for three to four weeks after planting.

Management: Established perennial peanuts can withstand mowing and grazing and are readily managed in pastures. Perennial peanut should not be grazed the first year, unless it has become well established in association with a forage grass that is ready for grazing.

A weed control program of herbicides and mowing over the top of the peanut is essential for stand development. Contact the County Agricultural Agency for herbicide recommendations. Optimum forage quality and yields are realized with a six week grazing cycle (eight week height is necessary to make hay). Three cuttings totalling six tons per acre can be expected from a well-managed stand over two years old. The peanut is well adapted to grow with Pangolagrass, 'Pensacola' bahiagrass or 'Coastal' bermudagrass.