

Description

Americus Indiangrass [*Sorghastrum nutans* (L.) Nash] is a native perennial warm-season bunch grass. It produces flowering culms 6 to 8 feet tall and vegetative culms can grow to 3.5 feet tall. It boots in late August to mid-September. Bright yellow inflorescence appears in mid-September to early October. Seed matures in mid-October to early November.



Uses and Adaptation

Indiangrass is found throughout the U.S. except the far western states. 'Americus' was developed by crossing two lines of Indiangrass germplasm from Alabama with two lines from Georgia. It was tested several years over multiple locations in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain of Georgia. It is primarily adapted to upland sites in Alabama and Georgia but should be generally adapted throughout most of the southeastern U.S. Americus has been utilized as

cattle forage for stocker heifers however it shows more promise as a maintenance forage for cow-calf operations.

Americus can be part of a native warm-season grass mix to provide structure for upland birds including the northern bobwhite quail, and in longleaf pine understory restoration.

Planting Methods

Seedbed preparation should begin well in advance of planting. Establish a clean, weed-free seedbed by either tillage or herbicides. Prior to planting, the site should be firm and have accumulated soil moisture. Americus can be planted several ways. 'Bearded' seed (with awns and hairs) can be planted with a special native grass drill or with a fertilizer spreader mixed with a carrier such as pelleted lime. 'Debearded' seed (awns and hairs removed) can also be utilized in grass drills or fertilizer spreaders. When using fertilizer spreaders it is recommended to cultipack before and after seeding.



Seed should be planted **1/8 to 1/4 inch deep. Seed placement is very critical.** Planting time varies but should occur

after last frost in spring while soil moisture levels are still optimum. P and K fertility should be met but N should **not** be applied until after a good stand is observed. N application at planting enhances the possibility of severe weed competition. Seeding rates for forage in a pure stand can range from 8 to 10 pounds pure live seed (PLS) per acre. A wildlife planting mixed with other grasses and forbs is 1.5 pounds of pure live seed (PLS) per acre.

Management

Americus should not be grazed within the first year of planting. After the first year rotational grazing should be practiced. Americus should not be grazed lower than 8 to 10 inches from soil level. Grazing to lower heights can severely reduce vigor and stand percentage. Cattle should be returned to pastures after grass is approximately 20 to 24 inches tall.



Americus indiangrass like other native warm-season grasses responds well to

prescribed burns. NRCS specialists can assist landowners with plans for proper forage, wildlife and restoration management.

Availability



Breeder seed of Americus Indiangrass is being maintained at the Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center in Americus, Georgia. Ernst –Southern Native Seeds is producing other classes of Americus indiangrass for public utilization.

For More Information

Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center
295 Morris Drive
Americus, Georgia 31719
Phone: 229-924-4499
<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/gapmc/>

Or Contact

Your local USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service Office

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'Americus' Indiangrass

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**Jimmy Carter
Plant Materials Center
Americus, Georgia**