

# Register of Australian Herbage Plant Cultivars

## A. Grasses

### 4. Fescue

#### *Festuca arundinacea* Schreb. (tall fescue) cv. Aberystwyth S.170

Reg. No. A-4a-4

Registered prior to December 1971

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#### Origin

Bred by the Welsh Plant Breeding Station, Aberystwyth, Wales, from a single plant selection. "This plant with its inbred progeny and the subsequent addition of new material of similar growth form has given rise to the present strain" (1). It was introduced for trial in Australia by CSIRO in 1957.

#### Morphological description (1, 4)

This cultivar is a little more erect and stemmy than Kentucky 31 or Demeter and this difference is most noticeable when the flowering tillers commence to elongate.

#### Agronomic characters

General agronomic characters are similar to cv. Kentucky 31; it has comparable climatic and edaphic adaptation. It flowers earlier than Kentucky 31 (4). Under English conditions (1) it is very winter-hardy and gives high production in early spring and autumn. It is slow to establish from seed and is sensitive to competition during the period of establishment but its early spring growth is comparable to that of Italian ryegrass and it is superior in persistency and capacity for maintaining productivity. It is also reasonably palatable to stock providing it is not left ungrazed for too long (1).

Trials at the University of New England, N.S.W., have shown it to be equal to, if not better than Demeter and Alta in productivity and persistence over a 3-yr period (2). In Tasmania on the other hand it is reported to give relatively poor production during autumn and winter but to be more vigorous than Kentucky 31 in spring and summer (4). It, like the other cultivars of the species, is tolerant of poor soil drainage and relatively high salinity (4).

Trials under irrigation at Milang, S.A. (3), showed it to have a growth pattern similar to Grasslands Ruanui ryegrass under these conditions. No significant differences in yield between it and the ryegrass were obtained but observations suggested that S.170 could maintain growth better during late spring and summer. It was possibly less palatable than phalaris and ryegrass.

#### References

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2. Hilder, E.J. (1965). Personal communication. CSIRO Div. Anim. Physiol., Armidale, N.S.W.
3. Judd, P. (1966). Personal communication. S. Aust. Dep. Agric., Adelaide.
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