

# Register of Australian Herbage Plant Cultivars

## A. Grasses

### 1. Cocksfoot

#### *Dactylis glomerata* L. (cocksfoot) cv. Brignoles

Reg. No. A-1a-2

Registered prior to December 1971

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#### Origin

Derived from seed (C.P.I.2145) introduced into Australia in 1931 by CSIR and named Brignoles after the town in southern France from which it came. In trials at Canberra from 1938 to 1940, it was superior to Akaroa cocksfoot and also to a number of other promising grass species both in productivity and persistency under relatively dry conditions (4). In later trials at Canberra, sheep grazing Brignoles cocksfoot had higher live-weight gains and wool production in winter than sheep grazing on *Phalaris tuberosa* (1). This superiority was, however, short lived (2 winters) under heavy grazing. Seed was distributed to several seed firms and to State Departments of Agriculture at the beginning of 1962. Certified seed of Brignoles was first produced in South Australia in 1962-63. It was certified in New South Wales in 1965-66.

#### Morphological description (2, 5, et al.)

Brignoles is fairly well tillered and moderately leafy. It remains lax and prostrate in habit for longer than cv. Currie and only becomes erect later in its development. Basal diameter of the crown is considerably less than in most north European lines. The leaves are of medium width, similar to Grasslands Apanui, and narrower and longer than in cv. Currie; they are also rougher to the touch than Currie and the Aberystwyth cultivars. In autumn, winter, and early spring the leaves tend to be blue-green in colour and this feature allows it to be distinguished from north European cultivars and Currie. It is close-panicled and average seed size at about 1.5 million per kg is intermediate between Currie and Grasslands Apanui.

#### Agronomic characters

Brignoles is more summer-dormant and drought-resistant than the Aberystwyth cultivars and the European-type lines like Grasslands Apanui but less so than Currie (3). Under relatively cool summer temperatures and with adequate rainfall it will give higher yields in summer than Currie but less than S.26 and S.143 (5). Under slightly warmer summers (N.S.W. Tablelands and Slope conditions) and with 560 mm or more annual rainfall it possesses sufficient summer dormancy to persist reasonably well (2). Under hotter summer conditions its survival is much less than that of Currie and Australian phalaris and only slightly better than S.26 and S.143 (3).

It is not as winter-dormant as S.26 and S.143 and will make more winter growth than these cultivars but not as much as Currie and Grasslands Apanui (1, 3, 5). It is more susceptible to leaf frost damage than other cultivars (5). Autumn recovery and growth is slower and generally inferior to Grasslands Apanui and Currie (2, 5). Best growth is made in spring when its yields are comparable with Currie and better than most other cocksfoot cultivars (2, 5).

Heading is somewhat later than in Currie but earlier than in Grasslands Apanui and S.143. It is free-seeding but sheds its seed more readily than Currie (3). Germination and seedling vigour are generally very good (2, 5).

Brignoles grows well on poor stony hillside soils but makes its best growth on more fertile soils. Under high fertility conditions competition from annual ryegrass is frequently a problem in establishment. Once established, however, Brignoles is strongly competitive and has been used successfully in trials to control thistles on the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales (6).

Brignoles appears more susceptible to leaf rust than Currie (7).

#### References

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