

Register of Australian Herbage Plant Cultivars

A. Grasses

1. Cocksfoot

Dactylis glomerata L. (cocksfoot) cv. Cressy

Reg. No. A-1a-4

Registered prior to December 1971

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Origin (1)

Developed in the period 1932-38 by the Tasmanian Department of Agriculture, it was constituted from 20 plants. These were selections from an outstanding local ecotype collected from a roadside site near Burnie and a small proportion of selections from introduced material incorporated to widen its genetic base. Seed was produced from these selections by open pollination under strict isolation and used for testing and subsequent bulk sowing at Cressy.

Work was suspended during the war and early post-war period and when testing was resumed in 1953 seed from the residual plants in the Cressy sowing was used for testing. Its pre-war promise was confirmed by the results of spaced plants, small sward and district field trials which showed it to be generally superior to the commercial and experimental lines available at that time. Without further selection it was given the name Cressy and released in 1962 by the Department of Agriculture through the pasture seed certification scheme.

Morphological description (1)

Cressy is, in the main, characterized by a leafy, densely tillered, semi-prostrate habit with long medium and slightly narrow leaves. It is less succulent than Grasslands Apanui and intermediate in colour between the latter and S.143. Maturity is mid season and the plants retain a relatively high proportion of leaf to stem ratio at ear emergence.

Agronomic characters (1)

Cressy has the same range of adaptation and the same major agronomic characteristics as Grasslands Apanui and other north European-type cocksfoots. It is intermediate between Grasslands Apanui and S.26 in seedling vigour and rate of establishment and it develops a relatively dense sward under grazing in the second year.

In comparative trials under grazing in several districts throughout Tasmania, it has been more productive than S.26 and S.143, particularly in summer, winter, and spring. Compared to Grasslands Apanui, the seasonal yields taken over all sites have not differed significantly after the year of sowing. Cressy is more susceptible to leaf damage in winter than Grasslands Apanui. In comparative trials with Currie it has yielded less during the winter and early spring but more during the summer and autumn. It is as persistent as the New Zealand cultivar but less persistent than Currie or Brignoles under dry conditions.

In western Victoria it behaves similarly to Grasslands Apanui and with this variety and S.26 and S.143 has not persisted under heavy grazing (2).

References

- 1.Prepared by Officers of the Department of Agriculture of Tasmania, November 1965.
- 2.Cade, J.W. (1966). Personal communication. Vict. Dep. Agric., Melbourne.