

Register of Australian Herbage Plant Cultivars

A. Grasses

9. Forage Sorghum

Sorghum vulgare Pers. (sweet sorghum) cv. Early Orange

Reg. No. A-9b-5

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Origin

This line is derived from seed of Kansas Orange introduced by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture in 1926 (2). Kansas Orange has been described as an improved selection from Orange made by the Kansas State Agricultural College at Manhattan (3). A certain amount of selection for stem juiciness and seed colour was done on the introduced material by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture and it was first certified in 1954-55 under the name Early Orange (4). It would seem, however, to be different, because of the selection done in Kansas and by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture from the Orange or Early Orange and Orange Sargo described by Vinal et al. (5) and the Orange registered in the U.S.A. in 1936 (1). Breeder's seed is maintained at the Grafton Agricultural Research Station of the New South Wales Department of Agriculture.

Morphological description (2)

The general morphological features of Early Orange are similar to Saccaline; growth and tillering habits are similar to this variety. Stalk is a little stronger than in Saccaline but weaker than in White African or Tracy. Panicles small to medium in size, erect, mid-compact, cylindrical to ellipsoidal; rachis branches loosely appressed. Glumes vary in colour from reddish brown to almost black and are thinly pubescent; lemmas with awns. Seeds ellipsoid, approx. 40,000 per kg, orange-brown, somewhat exposed in angle of glumes and extending to or beyond apices of glumes, but not as exposed as in cv. Sumac; endosperm starchy, nucellar layer present.

Agronomic characters (2,4)

An early-maturing type suitable for late sowing, cv. Early Orange has proved the highest-yielding variety under New South Wales coastal conditions and has a higher sugar content in its juices than Saccaline (2). Results also have been published, however, of trials in which the autumn and winter yields of Early Orange were slightly lower than those of Sugardrip and Tracy under natural rainfall in coastal areas, though tending to be higher than Sugardrip under irrigated conditions (6). It may also have slightly more resistance to leaf diseases than Saccaline.

References

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