

# Register of Australian Herbage Plant Cultivars

## A. Grasses

### 10. Pennisetum

#### *Pennisetum glaucum* (L.) R. Br. (pearl millet) cv. Ingrid Pearl

Reg. No. A-10b-3

Registered January 1968

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#### Origin

Introduced to Katherine Research Station in 1961 (C.P.I.28818) from Centre des Recherches Agronomiques, Bambey, Senegal, West Africa, and subsequently tested for 6 years against the local cultivar Katherine Pearl. Certified in the Northern Territory; breeder's seed held by the Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch of the Northern Territory Administration. Submitted for registration by M.J.T. Norman, Division of Land Research, CSIRO, Canberra. Registered January 1968.

#### Morphological description (1)

A robust, freely tillering annual up to 3.8 m high. Compared with Katherine Pearl, leaves are far less hairy, wider, and of a lighter green; the inflorescence is longer (up to 46 cm) and the involucre bristles around the spikelet more pronounced and clusters longer. Seeds are generally smaller, yellowish greenish grey and very tightly packed in the head.

#### Agronomic characters (1,3)

At Katherine, Ingrid Pearl takes 3-4 months to flowering, depending on time of sowing. It is 1-2 weeks earlier than Katherine Pearl. In experimental comparisons with Katherine Pearl peak dry matter yields have not differed significantly, but Ingrid Pearl makes more vigorous early growth. Yields of up to 20,193 kg per ha dry matter have been obtained 16 weeks from sowing. Nitrogen yields have averaged 12% higher than those of Katherine Pearl and have reached 134 kg per ha. The average seed yield is usually higher than that of cv. Katherine Pearl, the mean being about 800 kg per ha, and reports of 1200 kg per ha have been received. In trials at eight locations in New South Wales Ingrid Pearl gave mean dry matter yields of 8070-8180 kg per ha (2), which were slightly less than those of Katherine Pearl. The pattern of recovery growth after mid-season defoliation is similar to that of Katherine Pearl.

Ingrid Pearl, because of its earliness and at least equal productivity, is considered by its originators a more suitable variety than Katherine Pearl for the area around Katherine and for other regions of tropical Australia with a similar relation between day length and cessation of summer rain.

#### References

1. Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch, Northern Territory Administration, Darwin (1971). Departmental records.
2. Boyle, J.W., and Johnson, R.I. (1968). Pearl millet. New summer forage crop in New South Wales. *Agric. Gaz. N.S.W.* **79**(9), 513-15.
3. Phillips, L.J., and Norman, M.J.T. (1967). A comparison of two varieties of bulrush millet (*Pennisetum typhoides* S. & H.) at Katherine, N.T. CSIRO Aust. Div. Land Res. tech. Memo 67/18.