Ruzi grass (*Brachiaria ruziziensis*) for livestock feed on small-scale farms

**Objective**

To provide high quality forage for livestock feed in the humid and subhumid tropics.

**Description**

- A spreading perennial similar in habit to Para grass up to 1.5 m tall when flowering.
- Very palatable and withstands moderately heavy grazing.
- Can tolerate dry seasons of up to four months.
- Rapid establishment from seed or cuttings.
- Use as permanent or semi-permanent pasture for grazing, cut and carry green feed or hay.

**Limits of use**

- Needs well drained fertile soils and not tolerant of very acidic soils.
- Not tolerant to frost.
- Very susceptible to spittlebug.

**Management**

**Field preparation**—well prepared seedbed is recommended.

**Establishment**—broadcast seed at 2.5–10 kg/ha or sow in rows 60 cm apart no deeper than 2 cm, lightly cover and compact. It can also be propagated vegetatively by root splits or stem cuttings.

**Fertilizer**—apply 100 kg DAP per hectare during establishment and 100 kg nitrogen per hectare after every cut. Needs high phosphorus in the early growth on a wide range of soils.

**Weeding**—weed twice after planting at monthly intervals during establishment. Once established it can spread and suppress weeds.

**Harvesting**—should be cut before first flowering and then at six week intervals.

**Performance**

Expect around 20 t/ha dry matter yield and 7–13% crude protein.

This information leaflet on livestock feeds and feeding technologies for small-scale farmers is developed through collaboration between ILRI and its partners.

For further information, contact

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