Setaria grass (*Setaria sphacelata*) for livestock feed on small-scale farms

**Objective**
To provide high quality forage for livestock feed in humid lowland and highland tropics

**Description**
- Tufted perennial grass up to 2 m tall. Adapted to a wide range of soils but does not grow well on very acidic soils
- Tolerant of flooding and waterlogging
- Some ecotypes are cold or frost tolerant
- Palatable when young but quality quickly declines with maturity
- Use for permanent pasture for grazing, cut and carry or silage

**Limits of use**
- Not well adapted to alkaline or very acidic soil
- Not very drought tolerant
- Should not be fed young and as sole feed due to presence of oxalates

**Management**

**Field preparation**—well prepared seedbed preferred

**Establishment**—broadcast seeds at 2–5 kg/ha at a depth no deeper than 2 cm and cover lightly. Can also be planted from root splits

**Fertilizer**—apply 100 kg DAP or urea per hectare during establishment and 100 kg nitrogen per hectare after every cut

**Weeding**—slow early growth so weed twice after planting at monthly intervals. Frequent weeding is necessary until well established

**Harvesting**—cut latest at flowering and then every 3 weeks at a height of 15 cm to maintain quality

**Performance**
Expect about 10–15 t/ha dry matter per year and 6–15% crude protein

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

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