

SMUTSFINGER GRASS (DIGITARIA ERIANTHA)

IRENE

OVERVIEW

IRENE is an extremely drought tolerant sweet grass with a wide range of adaptability to climate and soil. Singularly its most valuable attribute is that it can be fogged so successfully with even the frosted material being palatable and nutritious.

All genotypes of *D. eriantha* are tolerant of heavy grazing. Regular grazing is necessary to maintain quality and to minimize disease incidence. Probably best if the grass is maintained between 10-15 and 30-40 cm, although this may not be feasible under sheep grazing. Ideally, it should be grazed every 2-3 weeks.

- Adapted to light-textured soils and red loam soils
- Persistent, productive
- Drought-tolerant
- Tolerant of moderate levels of exchangeable aluminium
- Good cool-season activity in *D. smutsii* types
- Tolerant of fire
- Tolerates short-duration heavy grazing by cattle and sheep
- Contains low levels of soluble oxalate

