

ALFALFA VARIETY DEMONSTRATION

Joe Janak, Cooperator, (2007-2008)

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SUMMARY:

In an preliminary evaluation of 18 varieties of alfalfa planted November 23, 2007, nine varieties grew faster and better than the remaining as seedlings. Results on this demonstration are still pending as no harvest has been made yet.

OBJECTIVE:

To determine the best all-around alfalfa variety to plant for the Victoria County area.

MATERIALS and METHODS:

Eighteen of the best alfalfa varieties donated by alfalfa seed companies were gathered and planted with a John Deere Grain Drill on conventional tilled DaCosta Contee complex soil that is typical of a dark, heavy clay type soil. Planting took place on November 23, 2007 planting 1/4 - 1/2 inch deep. Seed was covered by dragging a heavy chain behind the grain drill. Plots were 8' x 200' each or just under one-half tenth of an acre and were replicated three times in a randomized complete block design.

Moisture was minimal at planting but followed the next day with 3/4 inch or rain. Fertilizer knifed in on 12 inch centers prior to planting was 223 lbs/acre of 11-37-0 per acre or 24-82-0 which was slightly above soil tests recommendations. All seed was either seed-company treated with the proper inoculant or hand treated prior to planting. Some varieties were treated with a fungicide by the company. The field was pre-treated with 1.3 pt/ac glyphosate herbicide prior to planting on October 6, 2007. A follow-up treatment of 18.7 oz/ac glyphosate occurred three days after planting on November 26, 2007 to minimize any late season weeds. Request and DynaPack was added along with the herbicide sprays to insure higher weed control.

RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS:

Conditions were quite dry after the initial planting date rain of 3/4 inch and no rain fell until late December. Growth was minimal due to dry conditions and growth remained less than 2 - 3 inches tall. Differences were visually seen in December, 2007 within varieties as noted in Table 1.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Appreciation is expressed to the contributing seed companies listed in this demonstration. Contributing seed companies were: Forage Genetics International, S & W Seed Co. and W L Alfalfas.

DISCLAIMER CLAUSE:

Trade names of commercial products used in this report are included only for better understanding and clarity. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Texas A&M University System is implied. Readers should realize that results from one experiment do not represent conclusive evidence that the same response would occur where conditions vary.

Table 1. Height in inches after initial planting. Joe Janak, Cooperator, Victoria County TX, 2007-2008.

Variety	Height in Inches
WL530 HQ	3
Yosemite	2
WL652 HQ	2
WL535 HQ	1.5
13R Supreme	1.5
WL 711	1
SW 9710	1.5
SW 9628	3.5
SW 8718	3.5
SW 10	3.5
WL530 HQ	2
Sequoia	2
Magna 995	2
Magna 901	2
HybridForce 800	1.5
Cibola	3
Ameristand Salado	3
Ameristand 802	3
Ameristand 801S	3
WL530 HQ	3