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RYE FORAGE YIELDS AT OVERTON FOR 1994-95 AND THREE-YEAR MEANS

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Background. Rye is an important winter annual forage crop in East Texas. Rye will produce more forage during cold weather than other small grains or ryegrass. Rye is also more winterhardy than wheat, oats, or ryegrass. There are significant differences between varieties for seasonal and total forage yield. Some varieties produce more forage in the fall, while others produce a more balanced forage yield throughout the growing season. Growers should be aware of forage distribution when selecting which varieties they will purchase each fall.

Research Findings. A rye forage variety test is conducted annually at TAMU Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Overton. Commercial and experimental rye varieties were evaluated during the past 3 years. Fertilizer application rates and dates are noted on Table 1. Planting dates were early September normally, however, in 1994 the planting date was 9 September. Seed were drilled into a prepared seedbed at an 1 inch depth at 110 lbs/ac. Plot size was 4 x 12 ft with four replications. The entire plots were harvested with a Hege plot harvester at a cutting height of 2 inches on 18 November, 12 January, 24 February, 29 March, and 25 April. 'Fla 401' produced the highest yield in the 18 November harvest, indicating it is more of a spring type than a winter rye. 'FLA Sunland' triticale also produced a high first harvest yield. In the 12 January harvest, 'Bonel' produced the highest forage yield. In the 24 February harvest Bonel, 'Bates', and 'Oklon' were higher yielding. In the 29 March harvest, several varieties were nearly equal in yield. In the last harvest on 25 April, Bonel and 'Maton' were closely followed by several other varieties. The highest total seasonal yield was produced by Bonel, however several other varieties had similar forage production. FLA Sunland Triticale produced a lower forage yield than all of the rye forage lines. Leaf rust was observed in this test and data are presented. Normally leaf rust on rye is not a significant problem on rye.

Application. Data presented from these trials should be useful in selecting rye varieties for your farm. Depending on variety availability, compare forage yields to determine which variety you want to plant. Rye-ryegrass mixtures are often more productive than rye alone. Rye will produce good forage yields during the early fall, winter and early spring. Ryegrass will produce more forage in the spring to late spring and improve overall forage quality especially during the spring when rye has become mature.

Table 1. Rye forage variety test at Overton, TX 1994-95.

Variety	HAR 1 11-18	HAR 2 1-12	HAR 3 2-24	HAR 4 3-29	HAR 5 4-25	Total DMY	3 Year Average	Leaf Rust 0-9
			-------- pounds of dry matter per acre -------					
Bonel	522	491	822	1576	1031	4442	5101	4
NF 73*	408	385	864	1466	999	4121	4781	4
Bates	449	255	711	1488	955	3858	4415	4
FLA 401	1832	240	485	533	750	3840	--[a]	2
Oklon	543	356	869	1141	836	3745	--	5
Maton	364	205	495	1473	1160	3697	4756	4
Elbon	327	305	699	1374	899	3604	4304	4
FLA	1119	728	316	303	823	3289	--	0
Sunland	695	371	658	1169	931	3824		35
Triticale	402	107	206	446	304	773		-
Mean								
LSD (0.10)								

Planted September 9, 1994. *Fertilization:* Preplant 50 lbs N, 100 lb P_2O_5 and 100 lbs of K_2O/ac. Topdressed with 40 lbs N/ac on November 3, 50 lbs N/ac on January 19, and 60 lbs N/ac on March 17 applied as ammonium nitrate. *Herbicide:* Glean was applied postemergence at the two leaf stage at a rate of 0.3 oz/ac on October 4, 1994. *Insecticide:* Lorsband 4E was applied at a rate of 0.5 pt/ac on October 4, 1994 to control greenbugs.

*Experimental line, seed is not available.
[a]Not tested in all years.