‘Pastura’ little bluestem
*Schizachyrium scoparium* (Michx.) Nash

Source
The original seed was collected in 1957 between Glorieta and Rowe, New Mexico. It was under evaluation until its release in 1964.

Conservation Uses
For this species, ‘Pastura’ little bluestem produces an average amount of high-quality forage. This variety has a uniform appearance, with good basal leaf growth of a greater density than other strains tested.

Area of Adaptation and Use
‘Pastura’ is well-suited for range plantings on light-textured soils of the foothills and plains in central and eastern New Mexico and eastern Colorado. In these areas, it has produced more seed and forage than native collections originating further east. ‘Pastura’ is well adapted to adverse climatic conditions, particularly extremes in temperature and precipitation.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings
Keep the established fields free of weeds by using the recommended herbicide(s) for this species.

Ecological Considerations
‘Pastura’ little bluestem does not appear to have insect problems in either range plantings or seed production plantings.

Seed and Plant Production
Under irrigation, ‘Pastura’ little bluestem grows well on light- to medium-textured soil. Plant in late spring to early summer after the soil has warmed.

For ease of cultivation and irrigation, plant in rows with a spacing of approximately 3 feet (spacing may be adjusted to fit conventional equipment). Plant seed about ½ inch deep with rows in beds or beside shallow furrows so that the seedbed can be irrigated without getting water directly on the row before the seedlings have emerged and begun to grow.

Apply 80 to 100 lbs. nitrogen on established stands at the time of the first irrigation. A color change in the seed heads and early seed shattering indicate the time to harvest seed. The seed heads and, consequently, the whole field becomes a uniformly brownish color.

Use an all-crop type of combine to harvest seed; cut the air flow to a minimum; operate the cylinder at high speed. Spread and dry the harvested material to avoid heating.
Availability
Foundation seed is produced by the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center. Foundation seed is available to certified growers through New Mexico State Seed Certification.

For more information, contact:
Los Lunas Plant Materials Center
1036 Miller Road
Los Lunas, NM 87031
Tele: 505-865-4684
FAX: 505-865-5163
http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/nmpmc/

Citation

For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <http://plants.usda.gov> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov>

This is a cooperative release between New Mexico State University’s Los Lunas Agricultural Science and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Los Lunas Plant Materials Center.