CAUCASIAN BLUESTEM
Bothriochloa bladhii (Retz.)
S.T. Blake
Plant Symbol = BOBL

Contributed by: USDA NRCS Plant Materials Program

Adaptation and Distribution
This grass will grow on soils of moderate drainage or better. It will grow well on acid, droughty, and low fertility soils. The best use for this grass is on drastically disturbed sites such as strip mine RAMP sites in PA and South.

For a current distribution map, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Website.

Establishment
Caucasian bluestem should be seeded as the soil warms in the spring. The germination is slow compared to cool season grasses and the two types of grass are almost never planted together. Native grass drills such as the Truax, Great Plains, or Tye are the best units for planting this seed as they have positive feed mechanisms for chaffy seed and double disk furrow openers. If a suitable drill is not available or cannot be used due to terrain, then broadcasting the seed and tracking it in with a bulldozer is also an excellent planting method. Hydroseeding without tracking is simply a waste of time, money, and effort. Mulches are avoided with warm season grass plantings unless absolutely necessary to control erosion--then use 1500 pounds per acre of straw as a maximum rate. No nitrogen fertilizer should be applied during the seeding year. Phosphorus and potassium should be at medium levels, and the pH should be 5.5 or better on forage fields and 5.0 or better on critical areas.

Management
Once established, there is little management needed for this species. It does not respond as strongly to fire as do our native species.

Cultivars, Improved, and Selected Materials (and area of origin)
There are several hybrid cultivars from Oklahoma and Texas, but these are not recommended for use in the Northeast. Caucasian bluestem, sold under that name, is the best of the non-native bluestems.

Prepared By & Species Coordinator:
USDA NRCS Northeast Plant Materials Program

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For more information about this and other plants, please contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District, and visit the

Plant Materials <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>
National Plant Data Center <http://npdc.usda.gov>
PLANTS Web site (http://plants.usda.gov) or the Plant Materials Program Web site (http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov)

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