



## Is orchardgrass a good grass species for horse pastures?

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Unfortunately, orchardgrass is not very persistent in GA. Some producers in counties along our northern border have had success with it as a hay crop, but generally it does not fair well under our environmental conditions. This is generally true when it is subjected to grazing, but especially true when we talk about horse pastures. Orchardgrass is a high quality forage and highly palatable (i.e., they love to eat it). As a result, it is often overgrazed while other species in a pasture may be under-utilized.

Recently, the grazing tolerance of nine orchardgrass varieties was evaluated by researchers in Kentucky (a place where orchardgrass generally performs very well, if grazing is managed properly). Though all nine varieties started with a good stand (~90%) before subjected to heavy grazing (similar to conditions in most horse pastures), percent stand fell to about 75% at the end of the 1st year, and all varieties were less than 10% stand after 3 years. Click [here](#) to look at their report.

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