



Teff – the new summer annual grass sensation

"A new warm season annual grass hay with...quality and palatability rivaling Timothy for the horse-hay market."

Teff, a relatively new grass introduction from Africa, is fast becoming the new high value forage grass alternative for U.S. hay producers. Historically used in Ethiopia as a grain crop, Teff's initial success in the U.S. marketplace has been in the niche market of gluten free flour, as a highly desirable baking flour for individuals that are gluten intolerant and can't use conventional flour sources.

However in recent years the emphasis in research and development for Teff has shifted from grain varieties, towards identifying superior forage types. Preliminary evaluations by universities demonstrated that a few genetic lines of the original 400+ teff plant introductions collected by the USDA, were actually better suited as forage producers than grain varieties.

As a result, new Teff varieties have been developed and released for forage production. Varieties such as "Dessie" and more recently "Tiffany" Teff have been the most popular. Based on positive preliminary data from universities, forage and livestock producers began looking at Teff three to four years ago as a new annual forage crop choice. Positive results in the form of high hay production and reports of above-average palatability and animal acceptance has created a tidal wave of interest.

Many farmers now having a few crop years under their belts are now starting to take a serious look at this new warm season multi-cut annual grass in their crop rotation. Teff's high yield (6-8 tons per year) with its quality rivaling many other forage grasses such as Timothy (Table 1) has made it a high value single season alternative hay.

Teff's excellent forage quality combined with its high forage production during the summer months gives it a distinct advantage over cool season grasses. The following are a few basics and highlights of the crop; however, a complete management guide is available at www.targetseed.com. **HG**

— Information by Target Seed

	Quality Comparison	
	Timothy Hay	Average Teff Hay
% Crude Protein	8 - 14	9 - 14
Acid Detergent Fiber (ADF)	32 - 36	32 - 38
Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF)	53 - 59	53 - 65
Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN)	57 - 65	55 - 64