

SORGHUM X SORGHUM

Maturity

Days to flower: 64-72 Qld; 70-78 NSW

Chopper reaches soft dough stage which is the recommended cutting stage, about 25 days after flowering or between 85-95 days from planting.

Plant type

A tall late maturing grain sorghum, Chopper grows to a height of 2 metres. It is a very vigorous plant with an attractive, broad shiny leaf. It produces a large, solid white grain sorghum head. Grain fill is excellent and grain size is medium to large. Chopper planting seed is large and vigorous, which makes it easy to plant and ensures good even establishment.

Yield potential

Under irrigated conditions Chopper has a grain yield potential of 7-9t/ha. Silage yields of 30 - 50t/ha @ 68% moisture content have been recorded.

Under dryland conditions grain yields vary from 2.5 - 5.5t/ha and silage yields from 20-35t/ha @ 68% moisture content.

While Chopper can produce a good grain yield it is not recommended as a grain hybrid, because the height of the plant would jeopardise the standability at full maturity.

Feed quality

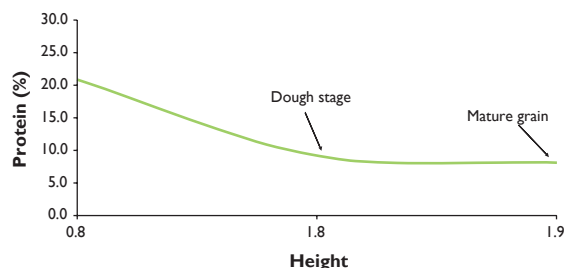
Under good growing conditions the quality of silage obtained from Chopper will be similar to that achieved with corn.

Digestibility	60 - 65%
Protein	7 - 9.8%
Metabolisable energy	9 - 10.5 MJ/Kg

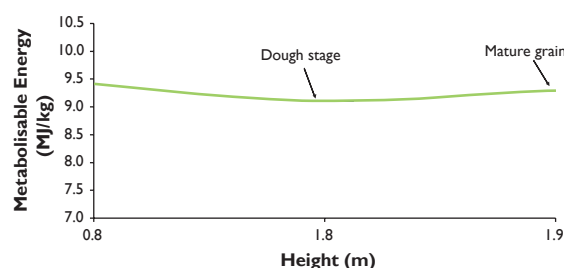
Planting recommendations

Chopper is recommended for use as pit or bunker silage, in irrigated or dryland situations. While potential yield of the initial crop is not as high as corn, Chopper's ability to ratoon can give greater overall yields than corn in some situations. Chopper is considered a much more reliable option than corn in hot and/or dry conditions.

Chopper Protein v's Height



Chopper Metabolisable Energy v's Height



Results from a trial conducted by Pacific Seeds Forage Team showing the effect of growth stage on crude protein and metabolisable energy of Chopper. Sampling started when the crop was 0.8m and continued at regular intervals for ten weeks until plants had flowered.

Planting rate

Marginal dryland	2.5 - 4 kg/ha
Favourable dryland	4 - 6 kg/ha
Irrigated-high rainfall	6 - 8 kg/ha

Cutting recommendations

It is important to cut Chopper when it reaches the milky to soft dough stage. Delaying cutting after this can affect the quality of the feed and may result in lodging of the crop. Soft dough stage should be reached 85-95 days from planting. At this time the crop will be around 68% moisture and can be ensiled without wilting.

Regrowth

In comparison to other silage sorghums Chopper has demonstrated excellent regrowth potential. Under good growing conditions a second cut is possible.

Second cut yields as high as 30t/ha @ 68% moisture have been recorded with grain yields of over 4t/ha.

Total yield over two cuts can exceed 60t/ha. Chopper may be grazed after cutting in these situations however, growers should be aware of prussic acid. Precautions taken in grazing other grain sorghum or forage sorghum regrowth should be followed especially if the crop is stressed, or has new regrowth. The provision of salt licks with 10% sulphur will assist grazing animals to detoxify the prussic acid.

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