

ROUNDLEAF CASSIA

Chamaecrista rotundifolia

Leguminosae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Description

This short-lived perennial legume is native to Florida and the Americas. It is now naturalized in parts of West Africa and Australia. It establishes quickly in sandy, infertile soils in the tropics and subtropics. It is heavy seeding and a good nitrogen-fixing pasture crop. Roundleaf Cassia spreads rapidly even under heavy grazing because of its prostrate growth habit. The plant grows about 1 m in diameter and about 30 cm in height. Although not very palatable, it has no anti-growth factors. It is a good pasture crop grown in a mix with stylos and siratro.

Cultivation

Roundleaf Cassia grows best in free-draining soil, it tolerates light frost and grows back when the weather warms up again. It grows best with 800-1200 mm of rainfall. It may grow in as little as 500 mm of rainfall. It nodulates well with native rhizobium. It does not tolerate flooding. A planting rate of 1-2 kg/ha is recommended. The seeds should be no deeper than 10-20 cm and should germinate in 3-4 days with proper moisture.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The seeds are hard and may require some scarification, either mechanical or dry heat treatment. Early flowering and heavy seeding make it a good pasture crop. It has about 16% protein and 60% digestibility. There are 200,000 to 470,000 seeds per kilogram. The plant flowers continuously in warm weather and one can have multiple harvests.

Pests and Diseases

Very few pests, but should not be planted where tall grasses may dominate.

References

http://www.tropicalforages.info/key/forages/Media/Html/entities/chamaecrista_rotundifolia.htm