DESMODIUM

Desmodium heterocarpon Fabaceae

ECHO® KARATASI YA MAELEZO YA KUPANDA

asili

The origin of this species of Desmodium is not clear but from its growing preferences it must have been from a moist, humid area with rainfall no less than 120 cm/year. It is now a familiar forage legume in Indo-China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Central and South America at low elevations.

matumizi

One characteristic that makes this Desmodium, a valuable crop, is its aggressive, creeping growth habit by means of stolons that sprout horizontally from the base of the plant and grow new plants at nodes and tips. For immediate erosion control, it should be seeded with faster germinating grasses but it will eventually crowd out these grasses when established. *Desmodium heterocarpon* succeeds well in shady areas making it a valuable cover crop beneath plantation trees or in shady pastures. Without heavy grazing or cutting, it will eventually crowd out other forage grasses as well as weeds.

Majina ya Kawaida

- English
  - Desmodium
  - Carpon

kilimo

Desmodium heterocarpon is not for drought or routinely dry locations. It will flower year round if given adequate moisture and will regrow when cut to ground level. It has a low nutrient requirement and tolerates acid soils. Dry matter yield will increase with the addition of fertilizer, lime, sulfur, magnesium, boron or phosphorus.

uvunaji na uzalishaji wa mbegu

This Desmodium species retains many of the wild-plant characteristics that make it spread easily but at the same time do not produce reliable seeds for commercialization. In the form of dry matter, the leaves themselves have lower nutritive value (10-20%) than other pasture legumes probably due to the high concentration of tannins. When seed does ripen on the plant, it appears yellow. Store seed in an area with low moisture (4-8%). When ready to plant, the seed must be soaked in hot water or scarified with sulfuric acid.

wadudu na magonjwa

Pink disease occurs on *Desmodium heterocarpon* in Malaysia. A wart disease (false rust) caused by a fungus, gained entry to South America from another country. The plants do recover from both diseases but with less foliage and seed. Root-knot nematodes can do significant damage and as yet no research into resistant strains has been successful.

mapishi na lishe

This plant is for animal consumption only. It is a legume, which fixes nitrogen but only moderately well compared to other legumes. The nitrogen-rich foliage is beneficial when consumed by livestock or returned to the soil through mulching and decomposition.

Marejeleo

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