

# Grow Brachiaria in Drier Areas for Livestock Feed



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**Editorial and Publication Coordinated by:**  
Knowledge, Information and Outreach Unit

KALRO Information Brochure Series 2017/089

**Kshs. 30**



***...and increased milk  
production***

## Ways of growing Brachiaria:

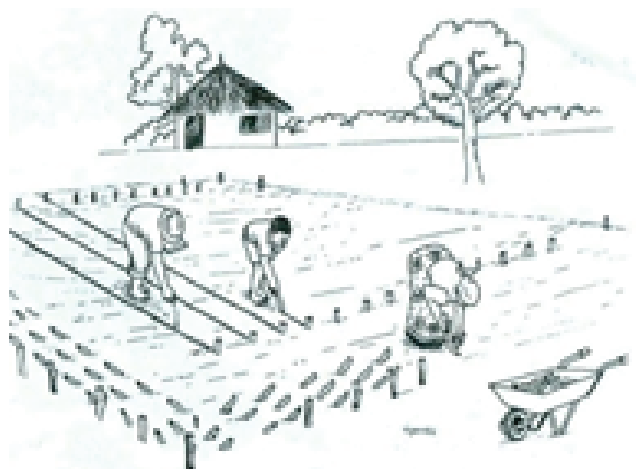
- Direct planting by seeds
- Through seedlings raised in a nursery
- Use of root splits

## Direct planting

- Plough and harrow land to fine tilth before the onset of rain Brachiaria is small seeded therefore the soil should be carefully prepared to a fine tilth.

## Planting

- Mark the rows 60 cm apart (inter-row spacing) using a string and pegs.
- Make holes 30 cm apart within the rows along the string. When establishing directly from seed, make holes that are 1cm deep, using a stick.



*Planting brachiaria seed*

- Mark the rows 60 cm apart (inter-row spacing) using a string and pegs.
- Make holes 30 cm apart within the rows along the string.

- When establishing directly from seed, make holes that are 1cm deep, using a stick.
- Plant the seeds (Mulato II variety) in each hole at the rate of 7-10 seeds per hole (pinch using two finger tips).
- If establishing from seeds, do not place seeds at more than 1 cm in depth.
- To avoid problems of low seedling emergence.

Brachiaria cv Mulato II has high growth vigour and will establish with more than 80% coverage 2-3 months after planting.

## Harvesting

This grass can be cut and utilized as livestock feed about 60-70 days (8-10 weeks) after planting or when the plants reach about 60-80 cm in height.

- To harvest for livestock feed, cut the forage at 10 cm above the ground.
- Do not graze livestock directly on the Brachiaria. It is advisable to cut and carry the forage to the livestock feeding area.
- After the first cut, it can be harvested every 40-45 days during the wet season and every 60-80 days during the dry season.



*Harvesting of brachiaria*

- To maximize re-growth apply organic manure or nitrogenous inorganic fertilizer after every harvest.



*Young brachiaria plants*

## Utilization

- After harvesting chop the Brachiaria grass and place it in the feeding area.
- It can be mixed with legume fodder e.g. desmodium to boost nutrition and milk production.



*Feeding cattle with brachiaria*