

MaxQ an Alternative to Orchardgrass & Smooth Bromegrass

Greater Persistence, Superior Grazing Tolerance, Non-Toxic


Tall fescue, orchardgrass and smooth bromegrass are popular forages that are widely adapted across the United States. These cool season perennial grasses have similar seasonal growth patterns and are commonly used for grazing and hay production. Traditionally, many farmers have preferred orchardgrass and smooth bromegrass over fescue for hay production because of concerns about fescue toxicity. A number of producers have chosen to overseed orchardgrass, smooth bromegrass or legumes into their toxic fescue pastures in an effort to dilute the amount of toxin ingested and thus mitigate the effects of toxic tall fescue in their cattle herd. Currently, the supply of orchardgrass and smooth bromegrass seed is very limited and costly, causing farmers who need to establish new pastures or wish to thicken existing orchardgrass and smooth bromegrass pastures and/or hayfields to explore other options.

Novel Endophyte-Infected Tall Fescue a Good Alternative

The availability of non-toxic, novel endophyte-infected tall fescue varieties such as [Jesup MaxQ](#) and [Texoma MaxQ II](#) now give farmers a good and perhaps better alternative to orchardgrass and smooth bromegrass for their high quality, non-toxic pasture and hay forage needs. With orchardgrass and bromegrass, farmers often need to periodically thicken or replant their pastures to maintain a suitable stand. In contrast, tall fescue offers superior persistence in grazing systems with stands lasting decades when properly managed. It also has a wider range of adaptability than orchardgrass and smooth bromegrass.

As can be seen in the MaxQ, Orchardgrass and Smooth Bromegrass Comparison table, MaxQ offers a number of superior production traits over orchardgrass and smooth bromegrass while providing the same animal performance and forage quality traits producers desire.

MaxQ, Orchardgrass & Smooth Bromegrass Compared

DESIRED TRAIT		OG	SB
Ease of Establishment	G	G	F
Stand Longevity	E	F	G
Grazing Tolerance	E	F	F
Drought Tolerance	G	F	G
Disease Tolerance	E	P	P
Cattle Performance	E	E	E
Equine Performance	E	E	E
Hay Production	E	E	E
Forage Quality	E	E	E
Summer Productivity	G	P	F

P – poor, F – fair, G – good, E – excellent

