

SORGHUM SUDANGRASS

Sorghum-sudangrass hybrids are unrivaled for adding organic matter to worn-out soils. These tall, fast-growing, heat-loving summer annual grasses can smother weeds, suppress some nematode species and penetrate compacted subsoil if mowed once. Seed cost is modest. Followed by a legume cover crop, sorghum-sudangrass hybrids are a top choice for renovating overfarmed or compacted fields.

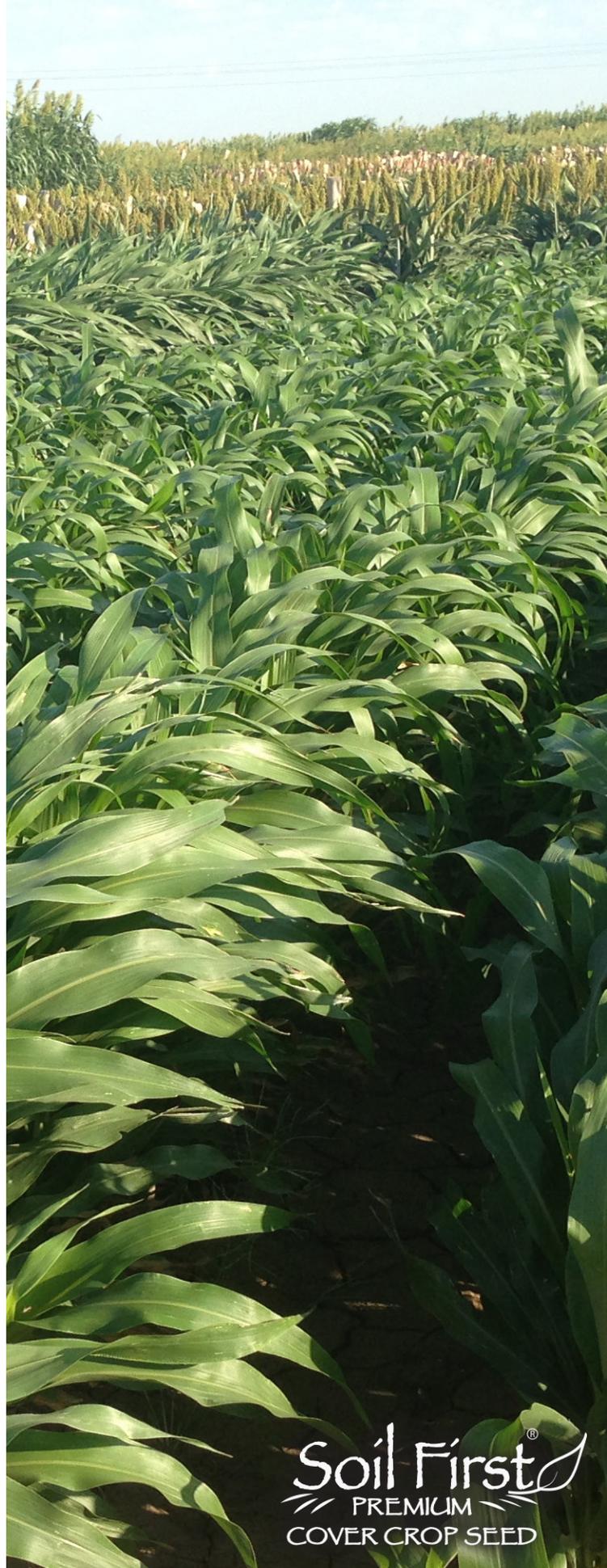
The hybrids are crosses between forage-type sorghums and sudangrass. Compared with corn, they have less leaf area, more secondary roots and a waxier leaf surface, traits that help them withstand drought (361). Like corn, they require good fertility—and usually supplemental nitrogen—for best growth. Compared with sudangrass, these hybrids are taller, coarser and more productive.

Forage-type sorghum plants are larger, leafier and mature later than grain sorghum plants. Compared with sorghum-sudangrass hybrids, they are shorter, less drought tolerant, and don't regrow as well. Still, forage sorghums as well as most forms of sudangrass can be used in the same cover-cropping roles as sorghum-sudangrass hybrids. All sorghum- and sudangrass-related species produce compounds that inhibit certain plants and nematodes. They are not frost tolerant, and should be planted after the soil warms in spring or in summer at least six weeks before first frost.*

- Summer Annual grass with high biomass production and nitrogen scavenging properties
- Best suited for summer/late summer seeding to take advantage of growing-degree-units for quick growth
- Excellent re-growth, drought tolerance and feed value
- Well suited for multiple harvest systems
- Sown at even higher rates when used as forage, it makes a great weed suppressor
- Large root mass produced as it's needed for withstanding heat and drought

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<https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books/Managing-Cover-Crops-Profitably-3rd-Edition/Text-Version/Nonlegume-Cover-Crops/Sorghum-Sudangrass>



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