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"Earlyploid" - Tetraploid Annual Ryegrass[1]

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Earlyploid (experimental line: MAR Early 4X) is a large-seeded, upright, early forage-producing and early maturing annual ryegrass. It is the earliest tetraploid (4X) ryegrass cultivar available commercially. It offers excellent disease resistance and sufficient cold tolerance to be grown successfully in the southern annual ryegrass region of the U.S. Earlyploid was developed from FL X2000 (G) 4X ER Early following four cycles of recurrent selection (2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007) for disease resistance (leaf rust, stem rust, and gray leafspot), early forage production, and early seed maturity at the North Florida Research and Education Center, Marianna.

Earlyploid was tested in regional ryegrass variety trials and is the earliest forage-producing tetraploid ryegrass available. While total seasonal yields of Earlyploid are competitive in comparison with other commercially available cultivars, its early forage production and disease resistance are its key values to the producer. It has early-season growth that is desirable by beef cattle producers in need of early ryegrass forage. It is also a good fit for dairy farmers who harvest ryegrass as silage in late February or early March in time to plant corn (around March 1). Most commercially available ryegrasses tend to have late March peak forage production periods, and herbicides are often needed to prevent the ryegrass from continuing to grow after the corn has been planted. Earlyploid has an upright growth habit, early forage production, and early maturity that better fits the cool-season forage production period and spring corn planting for regional dairy farmers. This new variety will be widely

adapted over the Southeastern ryegrass belt, especially the southern portion, including Central Florida. Results from Georgia and Florida regional trials can be found at http://www.swvt.uga.edu/2011/sm11/AP100-3-RyegrassF.pdf.

This tetraploid has good cold resistance for mild winters in the southern Coastal Plains of the U.S. Earlyploid also has excellent resistance to crown rust, improved resistance to stem rust, and good resistance to gray leaf spot and *Helminthosporium* leaf spot disease. UF/IFAS has applied for plant variety protection (PVP) for Earlyploid, and marketing and distribution are through Ragan and Massey Seed, Ponchatoula, LA (by phone: 985-386-6042 or on the web: http://www.raganandmassey.com/index.html).

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