

REGISTRATION OF PATHFINDER SWITCHGRASS¹

(Reg. No. 17)

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'PATHFINDER' switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum* L.) is a late-maturing, perennial, warm-season, prairie grass used for conservation plantings and for summer grazing. It was released in 1967 by the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station in cooperation with the Crops Research Division, Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Pathfinder was developed by hybridization and selection from native grassland collections in Nebraska and Kansas. Clones selected as "Type F" were polycrossed and progeny tested. Twelve superior clones of the selected type were again polycrossed in isolation. Within the 12 progenies, 192 plants were selected and intercrossed in isolation. The harvested seed was designated breeder seed.

The variety is winter-hardy, vigorous, leafy, late-maturing, and rust resistant in its region of adaptation. It has given excellent performance in stand establishment and forage production for late spring and summer grazing. It may be used in pure stands or in mixtures with other warm-season grasses. Tests indicate its adaptation throughout Nebraska and adjacent areas in bordering states where switchgrass is used. The most favorable area for seed production is centered in the eastern third of Nebraska south of the Platte River where it matures seed before early frost dates.

Good seed yields of high quality seed are best produced in cultivated rows with timely supplements of nitrogen fertilizer in early spring and summer. Irrigation assures seed production although satisfactory yields without irrigation are common.

Three generations of seed of Pathfinder constitute the seed classes. Breeder seed and foundation seed produced from breeder seed are maintained by the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station. Certified seed is the market class for conservation and forage production plantings. It is grown exclusively from foundation seed, with no recertification of the certified class.

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