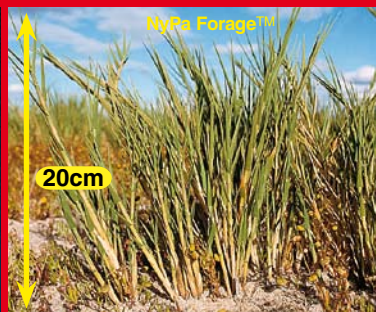


© photos G. Sainty
SALTdeck Series

DISTICHLIS *Distichlis spicata*

G7
GRASS



DISTICHLIS

Distichlis spicata



Alternative name: Saltgrass.

Family: Poaceae.

Description: Only available in Australia as NyPa Forage™ and this selection is vegetative and does not flower or produce seeds. *Distichlis spicata* is a deep-rooted low-growing erect to semi-erect perennial that forms dense swards (see photo). Spreads by stolons and new shoots from nodes on rhizomes. Its specialised roots and salt glands enable this plant to thrive in saline soil and water (see photo).

Key features: Distinguished by alternate striate, stiff, pointed leaves and extensive root system.

Value: Grazing value of NyPa Forage™ is not fully known as assessment is limited to a series of trial sites in WA, SA and Victoria, but is believed capable of maintaining liveweight for limited periods. Crude protein values of 10% have been reported.

Salinity and waterlogging tolerance: A fast-growing warm-season grass highly tolerant to waterlogging, partially tolerant of inundation and moderately to highly tolerant of salinity. Thought to have similar mechanisms to mangroves in surviving waterlogged and saline conditions. In its native American range it grows in coastal areas, beaches and salt flats including the intertidal zone.

Notes: Native of North and South America with both coastal and inland varieties. A selection of an inland variety of *Distichlis spicata* has been introduced to Australia. Relatively difficult to establish as it does not produce seeds and manual or mechanical planting is necessary.

References: *Saltland Pastures in Australia*, Barrett-Lennard, 2003. *Handbook of Restoring Tidal Wetlands*, Zedler (ed), 2001.

