

Drought-resilient Urochloa forage for year-round livestock feeding



Better grass. Better livestock.

Urochloa forage grasses are a gender-sensitive, climate-resilient solution for better animal feed. They yield **8–15 t per hectare** and are easy for farmers to manage. Deep roots provide drought tolerance, while thick mats suppress weeds and reduce labour. Development partners can promote seed multiplication, training and market linkages to help smallholders improve incomes and food security.

This technology is **pre-validated**. Scaling readiness: idea maturity 9/9; level of use unknown

Inclusion assessment Climate impact

Problem

- **Ongoing poverty:** Poor access to quality feed keeps livestock yields and incomes low.
- **Heavy labour for women and youth:** Finding feed takes time away from school and paid work.
- **Climate pressure:** Drought and degraded soils worsen feed shortages and livelihoods.

Solution

- **Climate adaptation:** Deep roots help the grass survive long dry periods.
- **High feed value:** 8–15 t/ha dried forage with 8–15% protein.
- **Income + food gains:** Better feed can raise milk/meat by 15–30%.
- **Soil health:** Dense cover reduces erosion and builds organic matter.
- **Steady supply:** Cut every 8–12 weeks once established, good for fodder banks.

Key points to design your program

Urochloa (Brachiaria) forage grasses offer a practical way to reduce dry-season feed shortages and improve milk and meat production in Sub-Saharan Africa. They help farmers produce more, better-quality fodder while protecting soils through strong ground cover.

These forages support **SDG 1** (higher incomes from livestock and hay), **SDG 2** (better food and nutrition through more milk and meat), **SDG 13** (greater climate resilience through reliable feed in dry periods), and **SDG 15** (better land management through reduced erosion and improved soil health).

Led by the **Alliance Bioversity International & CIAT (Tropical Forages Program)** and promoted through TAAT, the technology can be scaled through government programs that combine seed access, demonstration plots, extension training, hay making support, and strong links to cooperatives and dairy hubs.

This is an effective option for government initiatives that want to strengthen livestock value chains, climate adaptation, and rural livelihoods.

Alliance

The Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)
Solomon Mwendia

Commodities

Forage grasses

Sustainable Development Goals

Categories

Production, Improved varieties, Yield improvement, Drought tolerance

Tested/adopted in

Where it can be used

This technology can be used in the colored agro-ecological zones.

Target groups

Breeders, Development institutions, Farmers, Seed companies, Researcher center, Soil scientists, Seed Regulators

+ 1 more

2616 USD	20400 USD	17784 USD	680 %
Cost Per hectare over 10 years	Revenue Per hectare over 10 years	Net income Per hectare over 10 years	ROI Over 10 years

IP

Open source / open access



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Last updated on 25 March 2026, printed on 25 March 2026