

Mulato II

Scientific name: *Brachiaria ruziziensis* x *B. brizantha* x *B. decumbens*

Productivity: In Thailand on low fertility soils, Mulato II produces between 14 and 17 t/dry matter per hectare/year. 70% is produced in the 6 month wet season and 30% in the 6 month dry season under no irrigation. Mulato II is very drought tolerant.

Crude protein levels: 10-14% crude protein in Thailand on poor soils and 12-17 % crude protein on better soils in Florida, USA.

Animal production: No data from Thailand, but in Florida USA, young animals grazing Mulato pastures at 4-6 heifers/ha averaged 0.4-0.6 kg, liveweight per day with no concentrates. Only grass.

Grazing management: Can be either rotationally grazed or set stocked. Management depends on the farmer's experience. Most farmers in Southeast Asia prefer cut-and-carry. Therefore cut every 40-45 days in the wet season and 60-70 days in the cool season.

Establishment: Can be either planted in rows, 50 cm apart, or broadcast sown at 10-12 kg/ha. Sow the seed on to the soil surface, brush the seed with soil by using tree branches or large brooms. Bury the seed no more than 1-2 cm under the soil.

Background: Mulato II (*B. ruziziensis* x *B. decumbens* x *B. brizantha*), was developed from an original *B. ruziziensis* x *B. decumbens* cross followed by 2 generations of hybridisation by exposure to *B. brizantha* pollen in the field and was released by Grupo Papalotla in 2004. In trials in Central and South America, Mulato II produced more dry season forage and had better milk production over time than Mulato and other *Brachiaria* cultivars. It also produced more seed than Mulato.

Hybrid brachiariagrass cultivars bred at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture [Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT)] have shown high tolerance to prolonged periods of drought and quick green regrowth during dry periods. They have also shown tolerance to soil acidity, and while growing better on intermediate to high fertility soils, they do grow well on low fertility soils.





