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Background

Commando is the latest high-yielding perennial ryegrass release bred by AgResearch Grasslands. It is a medium-tillered, diploid perennial ryegrass, with a medium flowering date. *Commando* is a very high yielding cultivar, both in late winter and warmer periods of the year.

Commando was bred from persistent plants selected in Northland, and crossed with elite plants from the AgResearch breeding pools. Selection and breeding was conducted in Northland because it is a tough environment for ryegrass, which puts high pressure on both persistence and rust tolerance. When *Commando* has been tested in regions that are more favourable for ryegrass, it has been shown to have outstanding persistence and rust tolerance, in addition to good production levels. This breeding method has also resulted in boosts to seasonal production with increased early season growth, and the hot summers resulting in selection for heat tolerance.

Commando is one of the first cultivars to be commercially available with *AR37* novel endophyte.

Characteristics

Perenniality	Leaf Size	Flowering Date	Suggested Sowing Rate (kg/ha)
100% Perennial	Medium	Mid (+1)	18 -20

Rust Tolerance	1000 Seed Weight	Ploidy	Endophyte
Very high	2.0 grams	Diploid	AR37, AR1 or LE

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Key Features

- ✓ Available with *AR37* novel endophyte
- ✓ A top yielding ryegrass
- ✓ Improved cool and warm season growth
- ✓ Bred from persistent plant types
- ✓ Excellent disease tolerance

AR37

The *AR37* endophyte was developed by AgResearch Grasslands and commercial partners for the increased resistance to 5 of the major pasture insect pests in New Zealand. Ryegrasses with *AR37* endophyte provide the highest resistance commercially available. AR37 provides resistance to five of the major pasture pests in New Zealand pastures. Ryegrass with *AR37* has better persistence; and yields on average 12% more drymatter nationally than the same cultivar with standard endophyte*.

*AgResearch trials over three years in four locations produced an average of 12% more drymatter nationally from a ryegrass with *AR37* compared to the same cultivar with standard endophyte.

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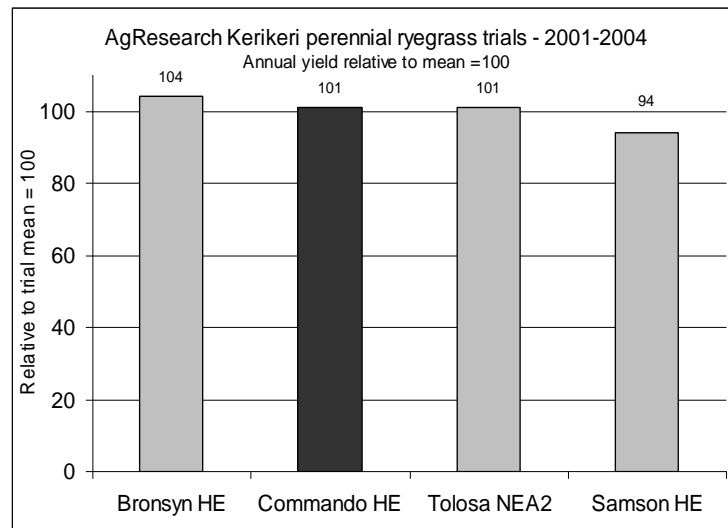
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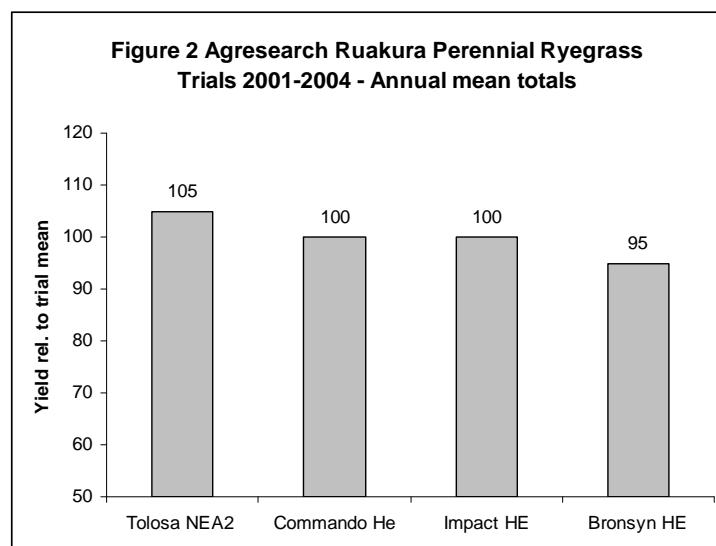
Production Data

Commando has proven yield advantages in trial situations as well as in farmer evaluations.

Northland



Waikato



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Southland

Figure 1. NFVT Gore Diploid Perennial Ryegrass Trial 2004

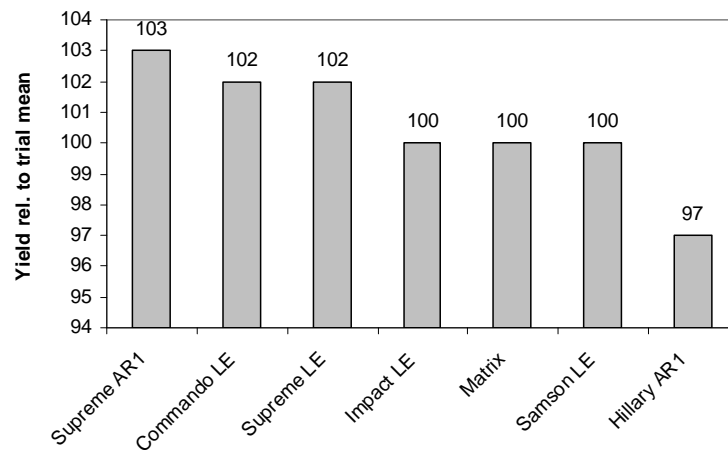
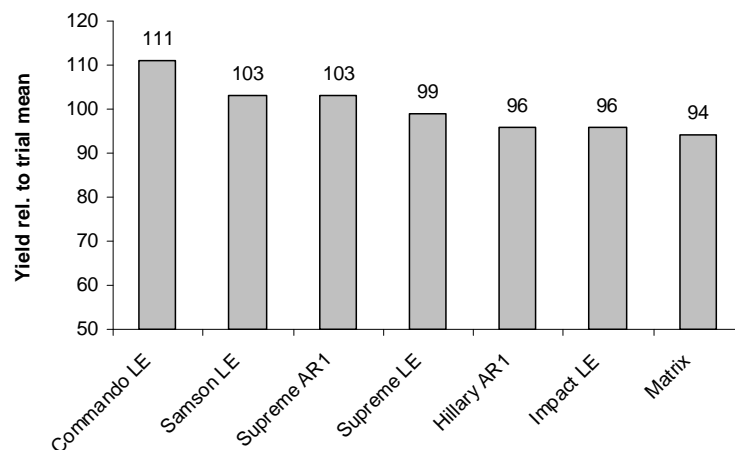


Figure 2. Gore Diploid Perennial Ryegrass Trial 2004 - early spring yields



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Suggested Mixes

Premium Dairy Mix

<i>Commando</i> AR37, AR1, or LE perennial ryegrass	18 kg/ha
<i>Tribute</i> white clover (bare seed)	2 kg/ha
<i>Emerald</i> white clover (bare seed)	2 kg/ha
<i>Sensation</i> red clover (bare seed)	4 kg/ha
<i>Choice</i> chicory (bare seed)	1.5 kg/ha
Total	29.5 kg/ha

South Island High Performance Pasture

<i>Commando</i> AR37, AR1, or LE perennial ryegrass	12 kg/ha
<i>Supreme</i> Plus AR1 or LE long rotation ryegrass	7 kg/ha
<i>Tribute</i> white clover (bare seed)	4 kg/ha
<i>Sensation</i> red clover (bare seed)	4 kg/ha
<i>Choice</i> chicory (bare seed)	1.5 kg/ha
<i>Tonic</i> plantain	1 kg/ha
Total	29.5 kg/ha