

# Perennial Peanut

Perennial Peanut Producers Association

## “Florida’s Alfalfa”

### Forage Legume of Commercial Importance

The Perennial Peanut is a high-quality persistent tropical forage legume which can be grazed or fed to horses, dairy and beef cattle, hogs, goats, sheep and rabbits. It can be stored as dry hay or silage and is an ideal substitute for alfalfa. Florigraze and Arbrook cultivars of perennial peanut, or rhizoma peanut, as it is sometimes called, have been selected in Florida for their high yield, quality, persistence, disease resistance, and drought tolerance.

Perennial peanut is well-adapted to dry, sandy soils and has the potential to persist indefinitely. Perennial peanut is planted using rhizomes, or underground stems, dug from a nursery planting. It does not require nitrogen fertilizer and once established, can be maintained with low level management. Hay yields in north Florida range from 3-5 tons per year for well-established stands. Quality and uses are so similar to that of alfalfa that perennial peanut has been coined “Florida’s alfalfa.”

Perennial peanut grows well in Florida, south Georgia and southern portions of the Gulf States. It requires no pesticides for control of insects or diseases nor does it require applied nitrogen as do traditional grass forages. These characteristics make perennial peanut an environmentally sound, low resource consuming crop that ranks it as an important component for sustainable agricultural systems.



The Perennial Peanut Producers Association was formed to encourage the expansion of perennial peanut production, marketing channels and production technology. The principal goals are to establish and maintain communications between Association members for the purpose of sharing technical and marketing information. Members of the Association exchange planting material and equipment, set quality standards for the crop and create greater marketing opportunities.

To keep abreast of the newest information, the Association meets for field tours of member farms and research trials. Agronomists and animal scientists from the University of Florida regularly share the research results of their work. The Association also supports extension and research efforts in promoting the improvement of production and marketing of perennial peanut.

As a member, your name will be listed in the membership directory which puts you in touch with needed resources and information. Upon joining, you will receive an informative Perennial Peanut Reference Manual. The Association is a non-profit corporation registered under Florida law and membership is open to all perennial peanut producers or those with interest in the commodity.

### For further information contact:

**Florida Department of Agriculture  
and Consumer Services  
Mayo Building, Room 427-A  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800  
Phone: (850) 922-9827**

or  
**Perennial Peanut Producers Association  
P.O. Box 352  
Madison, FL 32341  
Phone: (850) 973-2399**

[www.Florida-Agriculture.com/peanuthay](http://www.Florida-Agriculture.com/peanuthay)

DACS-01380  
Rev. 03-2009



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner

# Perennial Peanut "The Winner's Choice"



- ◆ Highly palatable forage
- ◆ Amino acid composition similar to alfalfa
- ◆ Calcium and phosphorus content similar to alfalfa



- ◆ Fed as hay, haylage or greenchop
- ◆ Can be substituted for up to 70% of corn silage while maintaining milk production
- ◆ More profitable than corn diets when substituted for up to 50% of diet

Perennial peanut is a **high-quality, multipurpose forage** with market demand that outstrips supply and offers a profitable return potential.



- ◆ Beef cattle which graze on perennial peanut are similar in flavor, juiciness and tenderness to cattle fed in feed lots.
- ◆ As a winter supplement, perennial peanut is more economical than range cubes.
- ◆ Steer gain an average of 1.7 lbs./head/day grazing on perennial peanut as compared to 1.0 lbs./head/day on bahiagrass.



- ◆ Greater feed consumption compared to alfalfa
- ◆ Greater weight gain and feed efficiency as compared to alfalfa



- ◆ Fed with 80% perennial peanut meal, sows yielded equal numbers of pigs farrowed alive and remained alive after 21 days compared to corn-soybean meal.
- ◆ Fed at 80%, sows maintain acceptable reproductive performance over successive gestations.