



ORNAMENTAL GRASS CULTIVARS

The following selections of grasses can all be grown successfully in Western New York's USDA Zone 5 winter hardiness climate.

- ❖ ***Miscanthus sinensis 'Gracillimus'* (Maiden Grass)** A narrow-bladed grass possessing fine texture, free flowering (typically in October), with a very distinct fountain shape, it is very attractive all year long. Growing five feet tall and spreading to six to seven feet, it will need some space. It combines well with rudbeckia, sedum, and hemerocallis.
- ❖ ***Miscanthus sinensis 'Adagio'* (Dwarf Miscanthus)** This semi-dwarf variety typically attains a height of three to four feet, is early-flowering, of elegant stature, and fine texture. A real gem, great for smaller gardens.
- ❖ ***Stipa calamagrostis* (Feather Grass)** Graceful, free-flowering, dense mound, producing graceful brownish flowers from June through October that last well into the winter. Produces a light feathery appearance. Height three feet, wonderful in fresh and dried flower arrangements, as are most of the grasses.
- ❖ ***Stipa gigantea* (Spanish Oat Grass)** Foliage to two and a half feet, flower panicles to six feet tall. A great specimen plant with large golden spikelets that come to life in the wind and remain attractive into late fall and early winter. Drought resistant. Needs space.
- ❖ ***Helictotrichon sempervirens* (Blue Oat Grass)** A medium-sized (three feet high and three feet spread) distinctly blue-colored grass preferring a hot, sunny well-drained location. The blue-colored grasses, which include many fescues, must be carefully paired with other colors in the garden where they can lend a sense of calm. Non-invasive. Do not fertilize. Great rock garden plant.
- ❖ ***Pennisetum alopecuroides* (Fountain Grass)** This splendid semi-dwarf (twenty-four to thirty inch) plant assumes a graceful fine textured clump form with drooping foxtail-like flowers (seedheads) that will win over any remaining skeptics. The plant in bloom emanates a universal degree of attraction. Dwarf cultivars include 'Hamelin' and 'Little Bunny'.
- ❖ ***Miscanthus sinensis 'Cabaret'* (Variegated Miscanthus)** A tropical-appearing taller grass (five to six feet) having moderately wide variegated leaves (one to one and a half inches) and spectacular flowers in fall holding well into winter. Avoid placing other variegated plants nearby. Combines well with daylilies, sedum, rudbeckia, and low growing junipers.
- ❖ ***Festuca ovina var. glauca* (Blue Fescue)** An evergreen, blue-green smaller grass (twelve inches tall) that thrives in well-drained soil with lots of sun. A great accent plant. Many cultivars are now available. Excellent in the rock garden.
- ❖ ***Pleiblastus viridistriatus* (Dwarf Variegated Chinese Bamboo)** This green and gold variegated dwarf bamboo (two to three feet) is a striking accent plant for full or partial shade. Can be used effectively in containers. Quite invasive, like most bamboos.
- ❖ ***Pennisetum setaceum 'Rubrum'* (Purple Fountain Grass)** This excellent purple to maroon plant is best treated as a tender annual. Plants can be set out once the danger of frost has passed. In the fall, prior to frost, the plants can be cut back to a couple of inches, divided into small clumps and overwintered in a greenhouse. This is a great plant to combine with other annuals or perennials in containers or in the perennial border. Yellow coleus can be a visually pleasing foil.

Come in to get suggestions and help with your planting.

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