

## Company releases new sorghum varieties for forage and grain in 2007

FOUR new Garst brand sorghum hybrids are being released from Garst Seed Co. for its 2007 lineup. Three of the new hybrids are best suited for making forage, while the fourth is especially geared for grain production. They are:

■ Garst brand 753BMR+ is a brown, midrib forage that delivers top yields of high-quality forage with long, wide leaves. The sorghum is versatile; it's a good choice for pasture, hay, silage or green

chop. Strong standability and photosensitivity give it harvest flexibility. The 753BMR+ will perform best at medium planting rates and in narrow or 30-inch rows.

■ Garst 311 is a high-yielding conventional forage sorghum with good agronomics. At 70 to 72 days through mid-bloom, this medium-early forage sorghum produces high grain yields for high grain-to-stover ratios on uniform, medium-height plants.

■ The 760BMR variety is another new brown, midrib sorghum sudangrass from Garst. This medium-full hybrid offers increased digestibility and palatability over conventional sorghum sudangrasses, making it a good choice for haying and grazing cattle. It has good leaf retention at harvest, with very good regrowth after cutting. The 760BMR is a widely adapted product, and the brown, midrib trait provides increased utilization and efficiency.

■ Garst 5464 is aimed at grain sorghum production. It is a medium-full hybrid with excellent yield for maturity, at 68 days to midbloom. It also exhibits good plant health and stay-green characteristics, with good late-season agronomics. It delivers high-test weight grain, and shows good drought stress tolerance, with good stalk strength under stress.

"Garst's sorghum lineup delivers a good balance of high-yielding grain and forage

sorghum hybrids to meet growers' different end-use needs," says Phil Kunz, sorghum product manager for Garst in Slater, Iowa.

Kunz says Garst is focusing on bringing to market sorghum hybrids that have high yields, excellent agronomics, drought tolerance and unique genetics needed for specific growing conditions.

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## New guidance systems improve productivity, reduce input costs

### Precision tools take farming to the next level

FOR the last two decades, leading ag scientists have foretold the benefits of integrating global positioning satellites (GPS) with computer-assisted guidance technology to help farmers traverse their fields more efficiently. For many Southern cotton and grain producers, that reality has finally arrived.

Today's guidance technology goes far beyond the light bars and non-differentially corrected GPS systems that were commonplace just a few years ago. Highly reliable and transferable components that offer improved accuracy in field preparation, planting, spraying, harvesting and many other tasks are now available at lower costs. These components also reduce variability and input waste; improve operational speed, efficiency and productivity; and reduce the fatigue of these operations.

Continuing research from Purdue University and other institutions supports both the agronomic and economic benefits of incorporating precision guidance into farm operations. Studies put the cost savings associated with precision guidance at 10 percent of annual input costs due to the reduction of overlap from planting and fertilizer and herbicide applications.

"Depending on the crop, the return on the investment in a guidance package can be much greater and the payback much faster," says Kayla Reynolds, product marketing manager for

John Deere Ag Management Solutions. "The scalability and affordability of these newer systems give producers who farm from 500 to 50,000 acres a chance to use the technology and expand it to include mapping and variable-rate applications."

For example, the GreenStar™ AutoTrac Universal Steering Kit, combined with a StarFire™ Network receiver (SF1, SF2 or StarFire RTK) from John Deere, is a popular guidance package that can be used on most types of equipment. With differentially corrected GPS accuracy from sub-meter to sub-inch depending on the activation level of the StarFire receiver, it provides a level of guidance that fits the needs of many producers. These new systems have expanded rapidly in the South and many growers have already moved up to RTK technology which allows repeatability and sub-inch accuracy.

**"I'd hate to farm today without a John Deere guidance system. It makes farming a lot easier."**

– Brian Allenbaugh, Grower, Augusta, Ark.

Brian Allenbaugh, who farms 5,000 acres near Augusta, Ark., says the ease of use and mobility of his John Deere AutoTrac Universal system make it an integral part of his family's



farming operation. "We're a lot more efficient and profitable with the guidance system. It more than pays for itself in what we've saved in fuel, seed, time and stress. Plus, I can move it from tractor to tractor as needed – it's that flexible."

For producers looking for that competitive edge or that one tool that can help put them over the top in improving their farming operations, integrating precision technology into their farms makes sense.

"In the last two decades, agronomic advancements have been made in plant genetics, crop protection and nutrient management," adds Reynolds of John Deere. "New precision farming technologies are the next step in that evolution to help cotton and Southern grain producers further maximize their productivity and profitability while making it easier to farm."

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