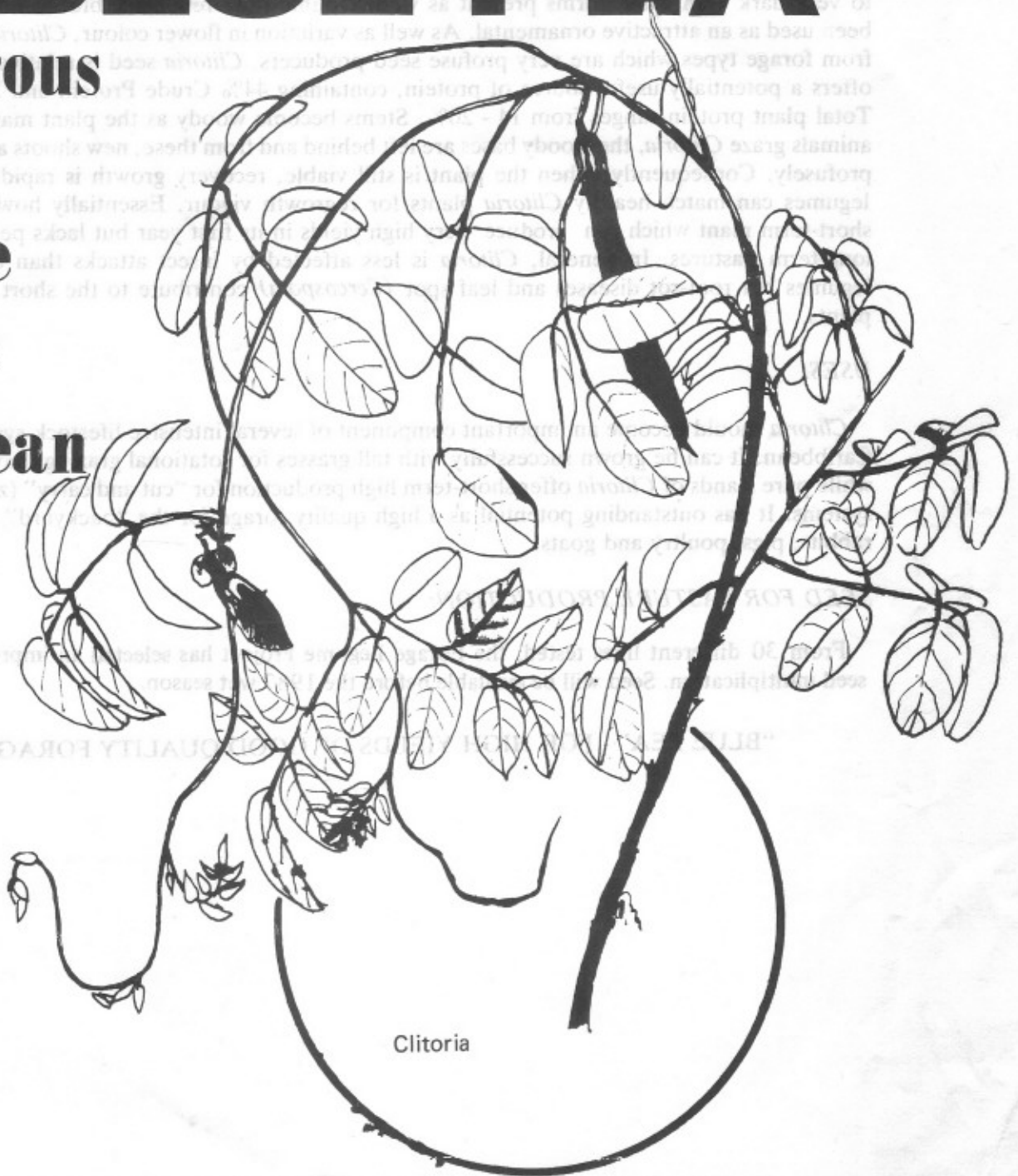


Factsheet

BLUE PEA

**A vigorous
Forage
Legume
for the
Caribbean**



APRIL 1987
ORDER NO. AF-1113-87

“Blue Pea” probably originated on the heavy clay soils of Ethiopia and the Sudan and was probably brought to the Caribbean as a green manure crop on the estates. Understandably, because of its origin, it grows well on the heavy soils of the Caribbean and can withstand long drought periods, but it is not a high producer during the dry season.

CHARACTERISTICS:

“Blue Pea” is a large, deep-rooted, climbing and scrambling legume. Unlike most other similar legumes, it has 5 leaflets rather than 3. Most flowers are blue, with a range from light to very dark with white forms present as well. Double-flowered, dark blue *Clitoria* has long been used as an attractive ornamental. As well as variation in flower colour, *Clitoria* lines range from forage types which are very profuse seed producers. *Clitoria* seed is relatively large and offers a potentially useful source of protein, containing 44% Crude Protein and 2.6% lysine. Total plant protein ranges from 14 - 20%. Stems become woody as the plant matures. When animals graze *Clitoria*, the woody bases are left behind and from these, new shoots are produced profusely. Consequently, when the plant is still viable, recovery growth is rapid - few other legumes can match healthy *Clitoria* plants for regrowth vigour. Essentially however, it is a short-term plant which can produce very high yields in its first year but lacks persistence for long-term pastures. In general, *Clitoria* is less affected by insect attacks than other forage legumes but root-rot diseases and leaf spot (*Cercospora*) contribute to the short life of most plants.

USES:

Clitoria should become an important component of several intensive livestock systems in the Caribbean. It can be grown successfully with tall grasses for rotational grazing, hay and silage, while pure stands of *Clitoria* offer short-term high production for “cut and carry” (zero grazing) systems. It has outstanding potential as a high quality forage for the “backyard” producer of rabbits, pigs, poultry and goats.

SEED FOR PASTURE PRODUCTION:

From 30 different lines tested, the Forage Legume Project has selected an improved type for seed multiplication. Seed will be available before the 1987 wet season.

“BLUE PEA” - FOR HIGH YIELDS OF GOOD QUALITY FORAGE!