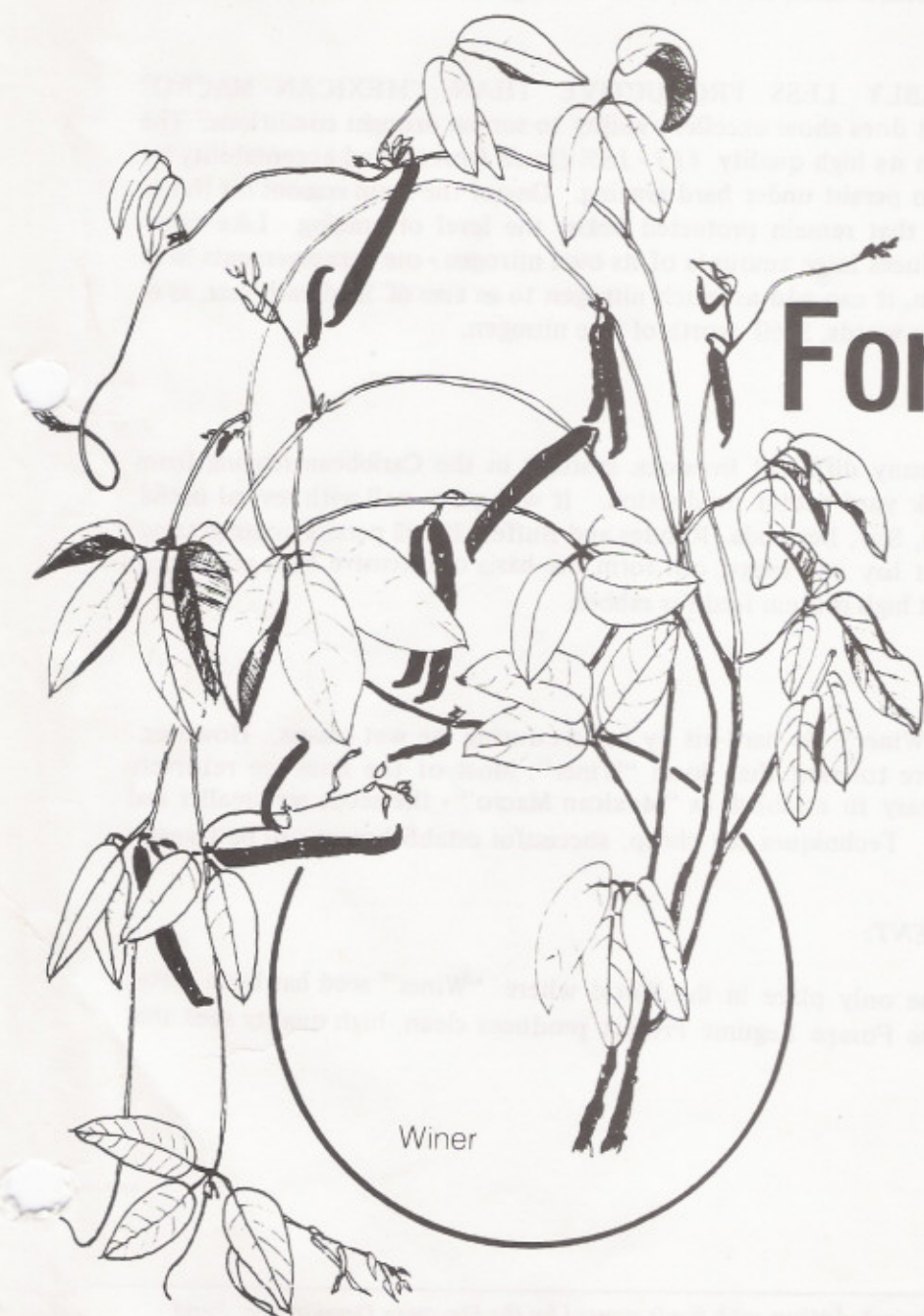


Factsheet

WINER

A Promising
Productive
Forage Legume
for
Caribbean
Livestock
Systems



CHARACTERISTICS:

(a) **Growth Form:** A deep-rooted, climbing and scrambling forage legume. Overground stems (*stolons*) produce roots which enable "Winer" (*Teramnus labialis*) to spread and cover, while twining stems climb neighbouring fences, stakes and grasses. Local "Winer" produces small white flowers and a profuse crop of seed pods which turn dark brown or black when ripe. Other types from St. Vincent, St. Kitts and Cuba have small, pale or dark pink flowers.

(b) **Agronomic:** The high value of naturally occurring "Winer" for livestock feeding is recognised by many livestock farmers in the Caribbean. The term "Rabbit Vine" for example, is very appropriate. In trials conducted by the Forage Legume Project over the past 3½ years, with more than 30 different lines, the outstanding properties of "Winer" have been recorded and documented. Few forage legumes are well suited to heavy, cracking clay soils such as those which dominate the central area of Antigua and cover vast areas of East and Central Africa. "Winer" however, thrives on these soils which are high in sodium and soluble salts, have impeded drainage in the wet season and shrink and crack badly in the dry season.

"WINER" IS CONSIDERABLY LESS PRODUCTIVE THAN "MEXICAN MACRO" DURING THE DRY SEASON, but it does show excellent ability to survive drought conditions. The great strength of "Winer" apart from its high quality (13 - 18% Crude Protein) and acceptability by all classes of livestock, is its ability to persist under hard grazing. One of the main reasons for this is that it has a deep crown with buds that remain protected below the level of grazing. Like other well adapted legumes, "Winer" produces large amounts of its own nitrogen - our measurements have indicated that under a grazing system, it can add as much nitrogen to an acre of land each year, as 6 bags of sulphate of ammonia. In other words, \$160 worth of free nitrogen.

USES:

"Winer" can be utilized in many different livestock systems in the Caribbean ranging from large-scale cattle farms to small back yard rabbit production. It will grow well with several useful forage grasses including Hay, Guinea, Star, Bermuda, Rhodes and Buffel. It will persist under grazing by sheep and goats, makes excellent hay and silage, can form the basis of intensive high producing cattle pastures and forms an excellent high protein feed for rabbits.

LIMITATIONS:

Like most forage legumes, "Winer" is hard-hit by insects during the wet season. However, several new lines appear to be more tolerant than local "Winer". Most of the lines are relatively free of disease. "Winer" is not as easy to establish as "Mexican Macro" - the seeds are smaller and seedling vigour is considerably less. Techniques for cheap, successful establishment will be investigated in the next two years.

SEED FOR PASTURE DEVELOPMENT:

Antigua is almost certainly the only place in the World where "Winer" seed has been produced for pasture development. The Forage Legume Project produces clean, high quality seed that is now being distributed regionally.