



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## ***Pennisetum alopecuroides* ‘Hameln’<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Introduction**

‘Hameln’ is a dwarf cultivar of Fountain Grass reportedly unsuited for the deep south that often reaches 2- to 3-feet-tall. The white inflorescence resembles a bottle brush and persists into fall. These attractive, 5- to 7-inch-long flowers persist on the plant from summer to fall but shatter in the early winter. The foliage of Fountain Grass is bright green during the summer, but turns to a golden brown color in the fall after the flowers begin to die. The foliage arches near the tip and gives the plant a graceful fountain shape. Fountain Grass is an outstanding, elegant, fine-textured ornamental grass. Unlike the species, this cultivar does not reseed itself.

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Pennisetum alopecuroides* ‘Hameln’

**Pronunciation:** pen-niss-SEE-tum al-loe-peck-yer-ROY-deez

**Common name(s):** Dwarf Fountain Grass, ‘Hameln’ Fountain Grass

**Family:** *Gramineae*

**Plant type:** ornamental grass; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5 through 8 (Fig. 1)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** mass planting; container or above-ground planter; accent; border; cut flowers

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

### **Description**

**Height:** 2 to 3 feet

**Spread:** 2 to 3 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** fine

#### **Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** most emerge from the soil, usually without a stem

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 18 to 36 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** brown or tan

**Fall characteristic:** showy

#### **Flower**

**Flower color:** white

**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; fall flowering

#### **Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** unknown

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** unknown

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-461, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October, 1999 Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

**Other**

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun

**Soil tolerances:** acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown

**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

**Use and Management**

This graceful plant has a beautiful effect when its image is reflected in water. It is usually massed together in a landscape bed or planted alone or in a small grouping in a perennial border to provide fine texture. It is suited for the residential landscape more than most other ornamental grasses because of its small size. It can 'make' a landscape with its extremely fine texture that provides a cooling effect as it blows in even the slightest breeze. Fountain grass makes an effective, tall ground cover plant or single specimen plant.

Fountain Grass needs to be planted in a site that receives full sun and has well-drained soils. Be prepared to provide

some irrigation during dry weather in the summer. The center of the plant becomes open as the plant ages with most of the stems originating along the margin of an open ring. Divide the open clump and replant to rejuvenate it.

The propagation of this grass is by division every 5 to 10 years.

#### **Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases are of major concern.