

CORTADERIA SELLOANA



Cortaderia selloana is a robust, tussock grass that stands up to 3.5m in diameter, and has flowering stalks that can reach upwards of 4m in height. The leaves are gray or bluish-green with narrowly tapering tips. The leaves are also bristle-like with the blade often forming a v-shape when viewed as a cross section. The margins are rough and somewhat cutting, and the leaves are mostly basal to two-thirds of the height of the flowing stalks. The inflorescence can be described as a silver or white with heavy branching and a feathery appearance, and is 400-700mm long

Cortaderia selloana is a vigorous ornamental grass widely used as a lawn specimen, but its quick growth rate and large size make it unsuitable for most home landscapes (Gilman, 1999). However, it is ideal for barrier or windbreak plantings and has a place in larger areas such as along highways or in commercial or industrial landscapes. *C. selloana* has been used to control erosion in serpentine soils (Danielsen et al. 2003). Selected strains were produced and used from the 1930's in New Zealand as a supplementary fodder for cattle

In its native range, in South America Cortaderia selloana grows in relatively damp soils and along river margins. *C. selloana* is found along streams and in the low wet areas of Argentina and southern Brazil. In its



introduced range *C. selloana* can be found in sub-humid and semi-arid subtropical regions. Pampas is capable of becoming established on a wide variety of soil types. Deep soil with good drainage gives best growth results. It is often found in open sunny places which receive added moisture, becoming naturalised as a weed in damp places, depressions, along stream banks, the margins of mangrove swamps and, in particular, disturbed areas associated with roads, pipeline cuts and walking trails in forest areas and waste places. Knowles and Ecroyd (1985) state that pampas is sensitive to frost at the seedling stage but will become more frost tolerant with age.

