**Pennisetum alopecuroides** ‘Hameln’ Dwarf Fountain Grass, Australian Fountain Grass

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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 re-seed 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  
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  

**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  

**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  

**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 re-plant 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.