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| International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants |  |

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guidance for development of variety descriptions: the italian experience

Document prepared by an expert from Italy

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# Introduction

This document is mainly based on TWC/32/PRESENTATION/4 made at the thirty-second session of the TWC held in Helsinki, Finland, on June 3 to 6, 2014. The method is still in progress and slightly different from last version. This method is based on partitioning into states of Total range of expression and Total range of historical averages. It is applied to varieties of grass species especially for quantitative continuous data but also for quantitative discrete data.

# Total Range of Expression

The total range of expression of a quantitative characteristic includes samples of values ​​observed during past trials. This range of values is the difference between the largest and the smallest item in past data and it represents the dispersion of observations. Historical data do not cover all the possible range and different phenological characteristics could be expected in the future where plant breeding might produce new or different characteristics.

# Total range of historical averages

Reference and candidate varieties can be tested over two or more years, producing means. Therefore each characteristic is represented by the range of historical averages that covers the intermediate part of Total range of expression. The method includes data from all varieties tested during 8-10 years’ trials. Because each variety must contribute equally the average of its past means is used.

# Partitioning of Total ranges into notes and mid reference

For each characteristic the range can be represented by a different number of states. The smallest note (e. g. 1) and the largest note (e.g. 9) are the **extreme notes** that cover the tails of “Total expression range”. Extreme notes might be equally or not equally spaced according to the symmetry of range histogram. The other notes are **intermediate notes** (e.g. 2…,8) equally spaced, as submultiples of the length of “Total range of historical averages”.

The midpoint of Total range of historical averages is considered a good reference for the purpose of dividing this range and it normally divides note 5 in half.

After calculation of extreme notes the next step is the division of “Total range of historical averages” into intermediate notes as spaces of equal width. If the range is not an exact multiple of notes number an adjustment of the range could be necessary.

The partitioning of the Total range of historical averages after some years from the beginning of the construction appears stable.

# Transformation of variety means into notes

For each quantitative characteristic the average of past trials means of each variety is transformed into notes according to values that limit each note.

# Update of total ranges

The total range of expression and the total range of historical averages could be **updated** (for example every “n” years). In this case the mid reference (midpoint) and some varietal descriptions could change slightly.

## Example of transformation into notes in case of skewed distribution

The species Tall fescue includes both turf varieties (usually not very tall) and forage varieties which are taller than the previous ones. The distribution of the two types of varieties (turf and forage) is shown in Figure 2. The data of character 10 “Plant: natural height at inflorescence emergence” are continuous values with a non-symmetrical distribution (positively skewed distribution).

**Figure 1 – Histogram of TOTAL RANGE OF EXPRESSION**

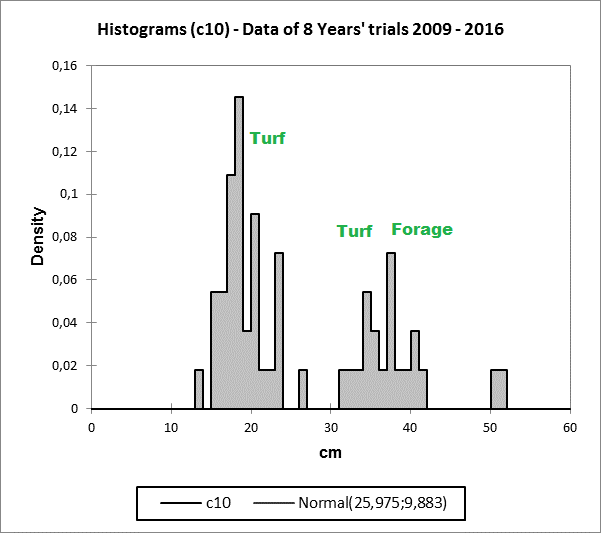
**car. 10** **Tall fescue - Plant: natural height at inflorescence emergence**

Data of 8 years’ trials: from 2009 to 2016

Total range of expression: 5.0 - 84.0 cm

**Figure 2 – Histogram of TOTAL RANGE OF HISTORICAL AVERAGES**

**car. 10** **Tall fescue - Plant: natural height at inflorescence emergence**

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Total range of historical averages: 13.9 – 51.4 cm = 37.50 cm

Total range of historical averages adjusted: 14.00 - 52.50 cm = 38.50 cm

Midpoint: 33.25 cm

**EXTREME NOTES**

Note 1: up to 14.00 cm

Note 9: more than 52.50 cm

**INTERMEDIATE NOTES**

**Notes between 2 and 8: 5.5 cm in length (equally spaced)**

**Note 2:**  14.1 – 19.5 cm

**Note 3:** 19.6 – 25.0 cm

**Note 4:** 25.1 – 30.5 cm

**Note 5:** 30.6 – 36.0 cm

**Note 6:**  36.1 – 41.5 cm

**Note 7:** 41.6 – 47.0 cm

**Note 8:** 47.1 – 52.5 cm

**Figure 3 - Partitioning of “Total range of historical averages adjusted” to notes**



**Table 1 - List of varieties of Tall fescue – car. 10 – Data of Years’ trials and Notes appointed**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variety** | **Type** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **Car 10** | **Note** |
| **FA 72** | **turf** | **13.9** | **14.0** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **13.9** | **1** |
| **FA 50** | **turf** | **17.1** | **13.1** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **15.1** | **2** |
| **FA 55** | **turf** | **15.9** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **15.9** | **2** |
| **FA 66** | **turf** | **17.3** | **14.6** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **15.9** | **2** |
| **FA 73** | **turf** | **17.3** | **15.4** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **16.3** | **2** |
| **FA 75** | **turf** | **19.1** | **14.1** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **16.6** | **2** |
| **FA 68** | **turf** | **19.2** | **14.7** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **16.9** | **2** |
| **FA 77** | **turf** | **17.4** | **16.9** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **17.2** | **2** |
| **FA 67** | **turf** | **18.8** | **16.2** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **17.5** | **2** |
| **FA 82** | **turf** | **17.4** | **17.7** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **17.6** | **2** |
| **FA 52** | **turf** |  | **17.6** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **17.6** | **2** |
| **FA 63** | **turf** | **17.8** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **17.8** | **2** |
| **FA 71** | **turf** | **19.1** | **16.9** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **18.0** | **2** |
| **FA 59** | **turf** |  | **18.0** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **18.0** | **2** |
| **FA 78** | **turf** | **20.7** | **15.4** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **18.0** | **2** |
| **FA 76** | **turf** | **19.5** | **16.9** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **18.2** | **2** |
| **FA 74** | **turf** | **18.7** | **18.4** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **18.6** | **2** |
| **FA 80** | **turf** | **22.0** | **15.3** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **18.6** | **2** |
| **FA 89** | **turf** |  |  | **13.7** | **23.9** |  |  |  |  | **18.8** | **2** |
| **FA 70** | **turf** | **21.1** | **16.5** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **18.8** | **2** |
| **FA 84** | **turf** |  |  | **12.9** | **24.9** |  |  |  |  | **18.9** | **2** |
| **FA 81** | **turf** | **24.2** | **15.0** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **19.6** | **3** |
| **FA 61** | **turf** | **19.7** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **19.7** | **3** |
| **FA 56** | **turf** | **20.0** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **20.0** | **3** |
| **FA 60** | **turf** | **20.4** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **20.4** | **3** |
| **FA 85** | **turf** |  |  | **13.7** | **27.2** |  |  |  |  | **20.4** | **3** |
| **FA 58** | **turf** | **20.6** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **20.6** | **3** |
| **FA 79** | **turf** | **25.1** | **16.5** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **20.8** | **3** |
| **FA 83** | **turf** |  |  | **13.6** | **29.4** |  |  |  |  | **21.5** | **3** |
| **FA 87** | **turf** |  |  | **15.8** | **26.7** |  |  |  | **23.7** | **22.1** | **3** |
| **FA 54** | **turf** | **23.3** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **23.3** | **3** |
| **FA 62** | **turf** | **23.4** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **23.4** | **3** |
| **FA 88** | **turf** |  |  | **14.1** | **33.0** |  |  |  |  | **23.6** | **3** |
| **FA53** | **turf** | **27.6** | **20.3** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **24.0** | **3** |
| **FA 86** | **turf** |  |  | **14.6** | **37.8** |  |  |  |  | **26.2** | **4** |
| **FA 64** | **turf** | **19.4** |  |  |  | **41.4** | **36.2** | **34.6** | **24.6** | **31.2** | **5** |
| **FA 94** | **turf** |  |  |  | **29.3** | **43.1** |  |  | **25.4** | **32.6** | **5** |
| **K 504** | **turf** | **28.4** | **15.1** | **18.6** | **40.9** | **49.5** | **47.4** | **36.0** | **31.5** | **33.4** | **5** |
| **FA 69** | **forage** | **47.6** | **21.0** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **34.3** | **5** |
| **FA 97** | **turf** |  |  |  | **29.7** | **39.0** |  |  |  | **34.4** | **5** |
| **FA 101** | **turf** |  |  |  |  | **38.8** | **37.6** |  | **28.4** | **34.9** | **5** |
| **FA 103** | **turf** |  |  |  |  |  | **37.0** | **33.5** |  | **35.2** | **5** |
| **FA 99** | **turf** |  |  |  |  | **38.0** | **34.0** |  |  | **36.0** | **5** |
| **FA 100** | **turf** |  |  |  |  | **39.7** | **32.5** |  |  | **36.1** | **6** |
| **FA 95** | **turf** |  |  |  | **31.6** | **42.6** |  |  |  | **37.1** | **6** |
| **FA 98** | **turf** |  |  |  | **34.5** | **40.1** |  |  |  | **37.3** | **6** |
| **K 501** | **turf** |  |  | **21.1** | **39.3** | **48.6** | **42.2** |  |  | **37.8** | **6** |
| **FA 96** | **turf** |  |  |  | **34.0** | **42.0** |  |  |  | **38.0** | **6** |
| **K 480** | **forage** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **38.3** | **38.3** | **6** |
| **FA 92** | **forage** |  |  | **36.4** | **35.1** | **46.1** |  |  |  | **39.2** | **6** |
| **FA 93** | **turf** |  |  |  | **35.9** | **44.2** |  |  |  | **40.1** | **6** |
| **FA 111** | **forage** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **40.8** | **40.8** | **6** |
| **FA 57** | **forage** | **41.2** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **41.2** | **6** |
| **FA 90** | **forage** |  |  | **35.9** | **64.2** |  |  |  | **50.0** | **50.0** | **8** |
| **FA 65** | **forage** | **54.3** |  |  |  |  |  | **50.4** | **49.7** | **51.4** | **8** |

**Table 2 - Example of transformation into notes of candidate varieties (mean of year 2015 and year 2016)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Candidate variety** | **Type** | **Car 10: Mean of year 2015 and year 2016**  **(cm)** | **Note** |
| VARIETY 107 | *turf* | 26.7 | **4** |
| VARIETY 108 | *turf* | 28.7 | **4** |
| VARIETY 106 | *forage* | 43.2 | **7** |
| VARIETY 110 | *forage* | 48.6 | **8** |
| VARIETY 109 | *forage* | 50.4 | **8** |
| VARIETY 104 | *forage* | 51.6 | **8** |
| VARIETY 105 | *forage* | 52.8 | **9** |

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