Greenleaf (*Desmodium intortum*) for livestock feed on small-scale farms

**Objective**  
To provide high quality forage for livestock feed in tropical subhumid areas

**Description**  
- Vigorous deep rooted trailing and climbing perennial  
- Fast growing giving good ground cover in 4–5 months  
- Combines well with tall grasses and creeping species  
- Adapted to a variety of soils and grows well on acidic soils  
- Shade tolerant  
- Can withstand lower temperatures than most tropical legumes  
- Used for cut and carry, hay and silage

**Limits of use**  
- No tolerance to salinity  
- Poor drought tolerance  
- Not adapted to areas with frost  
- Poor persistence under heavy grazing

**Management**  
**Field preparation**—well prepared seedbed

**Establishment**—broadcast seeds at 2–3 kg/ha. Cuttings may also be used since they root readily

**Fertilizer**—requires adequate level of fertility. Apply 100 kg DAP per hectare

**Weeding**—slow establisher, weed once after four weeks and again after eight weeks, when well established will suppress weed

**Harvesting**—first time at flowering after about one year, then after it is possible to cut every six months

**Performance**  
Expect about 19 t/ha of fresh forage with a crude protein of about 18%

This information leaflet on livestock feeds and feeding technologies for small-scale farmers is developed through collaboration between ILRI and its partners.

**For further information, contact**  
Forage Diversity  
International Livestock Research Institute  
PO Box 5689, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Asebe Abdena  
Email: a.abdena@cgiar.org