

Calamagrostis - Growing Guide

Growing Calamagrostis x Acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'

Feather Reed Grass

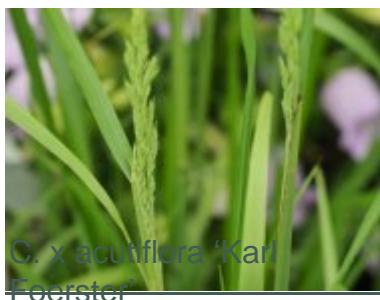
Calamagrostis are sturdy, tall growing, perennial grasses that originate from damp woodland and marshy areas in the northern hemisphere. *C. x acutiflora* originates from Europe and Russia and will achieve an overall height of some 6ft (flower spikes and leaf) eventually and, as such, these plants have a variety of architectural or ornamental uses beside waterways or informally in a wilder garden or, more formally, within a taller growing border.

The leaves of *C. x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' are a glossy green and will become up to 3ft long with only a slightly arching habit. The inflorescences appear in mid to late summer and 'Karl Foerster' has pink-bronze flower heads as we demonstrated on our Chelsea stand in 2019. The inflorescences fade to pale or buff brown and will last long into the autumn and winter for a superb effect.

Calamagrostis should be cut down to ground level each spring to remove the old flower stems and old leaves well before the grass reshoots. To do so in late autumn would be to remove one of the outstanding features of this plant in winter.

As their origin implies Calamagrostis grow best in moist humus rich soil in sun or partial shade. In poorer soils they will still do well but may not achieve their full potential in overall height. They can easily be dug and split with a spade or knife in spring as new growth starts to emerge.

Anyone who likes and grows ornamental grasses should consider these plants as a less well known but welcome addition to the range.



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