

# SEEDED BERMUDAGRASS

Great improvements have recently been made with seeded bermudas. Although they may not be as winter hardy as some vegetative varieties such as Quickstand and Midlawn, they are much more hardy than common Arizona bermuda. They also have improved genetic color and finer leaf texture.

**Best Seeded Varieties** - Best are Riviera (OKS 95-1) and Yukon (OKS 91-11), but these have limited availability for 2002. Princess, Savannah and Panama are readily available and much better than older cultivars.

**Seeding Rate** - Approximately 1#/1000 sq ft or 44#/Acre. A rate of ¼ to ½#/1000 sq ft is sufficient in most situations, but weed competition will be more severe at the lower rate and it will usually require an extra 2-3 weeks to get coverage. Most cultivars are available as coated seed. Since the coating is about the same weight as the seed, it is advisable to use two times the recommended rate, i.e. 2#/1000 sq. ft. of coated seed. Seed cost may vary between \$5 and \$25 per pound of seed.

**Seed Time** - May or June. Mid to late summer seedings seldom survive the following winter.

**Germination Time** - 7 to 10 days if moisture is available and soil temperature is high.

## Seed Methods:

- (1) Disk or rotovate to prepare conventional seedbed, broadcast seed with drop spreader, then lightly rake, cultipack or chain drag.
- (2) Slit seed with turf-type slit seeder or no-till pasture renovator. Plant bermuda seed shallow. (Spraying RoundUp prior to seeding will help kill cool-season grasses and summer annuals that would seriously compete with seedling establishment). No bermuda will establish in perennial ryegrass turf without the use of RoundUp to kill the ryegrass. BEWARE - If a crabgrass pre-emergence herbicide was applied during the spring, bermuda seedlings are not likely to survive.
- (3) Core aerate on 2 - 3 inch spacing. Break up and chain drag the plugs, then broadcast bermuda seed and lightly incorporate with chain drag or mat. Expect a reduced establishment rate with this method; soil seed contact is minimum.

## Establishment Fertility:

- If preparing seedbed, work N,P,K and lime recommended by soil test into the top 3-4" of soil. Re-apply nitrogen at 50# actual N/Acre every 2-4 weeks as needed to obtain cover.
- If slit seeding, shortly after germination apply about 50# N/Acre (150# of ammonium nitrate or 100# urea). Re-apply every 2-4 weeks as needed to obtain cover. A soil test is needed to determine needs for P, K and lime.
- If crabgrass and goosegrass become competitive, spray with MSMA. To avoid bermuda seedling injury, allow the bermudagrass seedlings to grow as much as possible before spraying with MSMA. When the young bermuda seedlings are almost dominated (covered) with annual weeds, it is absolutely necessary to spray with MSMA. Bermuda will not survive in the shade of weeds.

Follow these precautions when spraying with MSMA:

- (1) Use the 1# ai/Acre rate if the bermuda seedlings are less than one inch tall.
- (2) Use the 2# ai/Acre rate for normal applications.
- (3) Avoid spray overlaps that may cause severe bermuda injury.
- (4) Spray only when soil moisture is good.
- (5) Repeat initial spraying in 7 to 10 days.
- (6) Do not spray on a day in which the temperature is expected to exceed about 90°F.

See UK "BERMUDAGRASS PROGRAM" FOR ATHLETIC FIELD MAINTENANCE.