



A REPORT ON

Bermudagrass

The adaptability of bermudagrass to southwestern climatic conditions has been called both a blessing and a curse. The average homeowner has regarded bermuda as a rugged, wear-resistant grass which has endured more abuse and neglect than any other grass.

Bermudagrass originated in India and was introduced into the warm sections of the United States where growing conditions were similar to its native habitat. It has become objectionable in areas where it competes with cool season grasses. Its eradication and control are difficult and expensive.

Extreme variation in winter and summer temperatures has limited the introduction of new varieties to those strains of grass capable of withstanding these temperature variations. Experiment station workers and greenskeepers have long recognized the ruggedness of bermudagrass and are now concentrating on developing finer strains of bermudagrass which resemble bent grasses in texture and appearance.

Finer Strains Tested

A number of these finer strains of bermudagrass are undergoing tests in the southern part of Arizona. Observations indicate that these finer strains are well adapted and eventually will replace the

How about New Strains?

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common bermuda as a turfgrass for lawns and golf putting greens.

The new strains of bermudagrass are hybrids developed from common bermuda. Propagation can be accomplished only by the use of rhizomes.

The more promising varieties of these finer strains include: Tiffon #125 and #127; Everglades #3; Texas 35-A; Cynodon magennisii; Ormond; and Gene Tift.

Common bermudagrass is the most widely used grass in the southern part of the State. Under proper cultural management it can be attractive in appearance throughout the growing season.

Compacted soils caused by excessive play results in weak rhizome development, often followed by a heavy weed infestation. In such cases a program of renovation and reseeding is necessary to

create better soil structure for water penetration, aeration, and root penetration.

Bermudagrass is a heavy nitrogen feeder and needs constant fertilization to maintain vigorous growth and its dark green color. If soil conditions are favorable, a program of feeding should begin in late fall or early spring. Feeding during this time allows the grass roots and rhizomes to store nitrogen for use when new growth resumes in early spring. This method permits the grass to make rapid growth and compete with early germinating weeds.

Ammonium sulfate or ammonium nitrate are ideal mineral fertilizers to use on this fertilizing program. These fertilizers are highly concentrated and should be distributed evenly and at the proper rate. Ammonium sulfate is used at the rate of 5 to 8 pounds per 1000 square feet; Ammonium nitrate 4 to 6 pounds per 1000 square feet.

Additional applications of fertilizer should be made during the summer months if the grass is lacking in vigor or color.

Watering is extremely important in our arid region for maintaining proper root development and vigor of bermuda. Frequent, shallow watering is not favorable for deep rooting and wilting during hot dry days is often evident with such practices.

Soil moisture should be maintained to a depth of 3 to 4 feet for deep soils. Maintaining moisture at this level necessitates a heavy application whenever water is applied.

Mowing practices are important in the development of a fine-textured lawn. The lawn mower should be kept in perfect condition to mow evenly and cut without crushing the leaf blades. In order to encourage quick spreading and density of the lawn, set the mower cutter-bar at a height of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Mow at this height for about six weeks and reset mower at 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches for the remainder of the season.

Mow It Often!

Frequent mowing and maintaining a high Nitrogen level will reduce the number of seedstalks in bermudagrass. These practices will lessen the amount of pollen formed and released into the air. Bermuda pollen is the cause of frequent allergy conditions.