

PLANTING BERMUDAGRASS FOR PASTURE AND HAYLAND

Description: A rapidly spreading warm-season perennial grass having both underground and above ground stems. The leaves are narrow and are 1 to 4 inches long. Seed stalks have 4 or 5 spikelets 1 to 1-1/2 inches long. Seed are small and grayish to yellowish in color.

Uses: For grazing, hay, erosion control, and critical area planting

Soil adaptation: Suited to most soils except soils that are wet and deep sands. Best adapted to relatively fertile soils.

Cultural Specifications

Method of planting: By seeding, sprigging, or sodding.

Seedbed preparation: Thoroughly pulverize the soil to a depth of 4 inches and harrow to a uniformly smooth surface. Firm with a cultipacker before planting or allow rain to settle the seedbed before planting.

Fertilizer and lime: Apply fertilizer and lime according to Extension Service Soils Lab recommendations or the attached nutrient budget. Incorporate fertilizer and lime into top 3 or 4 inches of soil. Fertilizer and lime will be applied in separate operations.

Planting time: Plant seed between March 1 and May 31. Sprigging or sodding may be done from February 1 to June 30 when moisture or irrigation is available.

Planting rate: Plant 5 pounds of hulled clean seed per acre or 20,000 bermudagrass stolons per acre.

Planting depth: Cover seed 1/4 inch deep. Plant stolons in 36-inch rows with about 1/4 of the stolons above ground. Cultipack after planting.

Plant establishment: Control annual grasses and weeds by selective grazing, clipping, or spraying. Follow the MCES-MAFES Guidelines for Weed Control.

Plant management and maintenance: Bermudagrass will not be grazed until the plants are 5 inches or more in height, except to control competing grass. Livestock will be removed from the area as soon as the competing vegetation is grazed down. Apply fertilizer and lime according to Extension Service Soils Lab recommendations or the attached nutrient budget. Maintain a minimum grazing height of two to three inches. Use rotational grazing.