

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Landowner _____

Bermudagrass**WHAT IS BERMUDAGRASS?**

Bermudagrass is a warm-season perennial grass that produces above ground runners that root and form crowns of new plants at nodes. It initiates growth in the spring and continues to grow when moisture is adequate until the first heavy frost in the fall. It is primarily a green growing crop; however, livestock do well on reserved winter pasture when supplemental concentrates are fed.

HOW IT HELPS THE LAND

- Improve or maintain livestock nutrition and/or health.
- Balance forage supply and demand during periods of low forage production.
- Reduce soil erosion and improve water quality.
- Increase carbon sequestration

WHERE THE PRACTICE APPLIES

Bermudagrass grows well on a wide variety of soils, from clays to coarse sands, provided soil fertility is not a limiting factor. It grows best in deep, productive, sandy loam soils. Several varieties are available but use for each may be limited to specific areas of the state.

Seeded Bermudagrass: Common and Giant bermudagrass are limited to the southern parts of Oklahoma due to potential freeze damage. Wrangler and Cheyenne are more tolerant to cold temperatures and more suited for most of the state.

There are numerous brands of bermudagrass blends available. The components of blended bermudagrass sold by brand name are subject to change from year to year. Blends may contain bermudagrass seed that is not adapted to some areas.

Sprigged Bermudagrass: Varieties are adapted to most of the state include Greenfield, Hardie, Midland, Midland 99, Ozark, Quickstand, Tifton 44 and World Feeder. In the panhandle, irrigation is needed. Coastal is only adapted to the very southern tiers of counties due to potential freeze damage.

APPLYING THE PRACTICE

Preparation: Plant on a well-prepared firm seedbed. If weeds appear before planting time, a light cultivation is desirable to remove competitive vegetation.

Planting Time: Optimum seeding dates are April 15 – May 31.

Optimum sprigging dates are March 1 – May 31. Early sprigging, prior to spring green-up, ensures the highest root carbohydrate levels and the sprigs will be mostly rhizomes and root crowns (sources of new buds). Using higher sprigging rates when sprigging after green-up will help with establishment. Bermudagrass sprigs will be healthy, uninjured, live stems, stolons and rhizomes. Sprigs should not be cut or chopped nor allowed to “dry out”. Protect sprigs from sun and hot drying winds. Plant sprigs the same day that they are dug.

Planting Rate: Seed: 3 – 5 lbs PLS per acre at a depth of ¼ - ½ inch.

Sprigs: 20 – 30 bushels per acre.

Sprigs shall be place 1-3 inches deep with row spacing not to exceed 40 inches. Sprigs shall be well distributed in rows and not more than 18 inches apart

Management During Establishment

During the establishment period, excessive amounts of competitive weedy plants or re-growth of volunteer cover crops (generally, when 3 weeds per square foot or a 50% canopy) should be controlled by the following methods:

- 1. Herbicides.** Chemicals used must be federally and locally registered and must be applied in accordance with authorized registered uses, directions on label and other federal or state policies and requirements.
- 2. Mowing.** Weeds should be mowed when they reach a height of 6 to 8 inches. Mowing should be above the height of seeded plants. Mowing should not be done when daily maximum air temperature exceeds 95 degrees and the humidity is below 30% to prevent dehydration of the young plants. Generally, mowing should not be done after July 15.
- 3. Grazing.** High density grazing by livestock may be used to control annual grasses and forbs. This method will not be used later than July 15, except when abnormal summer moisture promotes excessive weed production. High density grazing will not be used when the soil is wet and hoof action will damage young plants.

WHERE TO GET HELP

For additional information, contact your local Natural Resource Conservation Service or your local Conservation District office.