



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Conservation Across America

Pasture & Hayland Planting

Job Sheet – 512



Texas A&M Grass Images, Bioinformatics Working Group; Photo from Forages 5th Ed. CD Companion.

BAHIAGRASS

DESCRIPTION - Bahiagrass is a warm season perennial grass with short stout horizontal rhizomes, which form a dense tough sod. It is aggressive and will crowd out weeds and other grasses when well established.

CULTIVARS - Pensacola, Argentine and Tifton 9 (see table).

ADAPTATION - Bahiagrass is well adapted to the high rainfall areas of East Texas, and the Coast Prairie. It performs well on a variety of soils, and performs better than Coastal bermudagrass on wet soils. It is not as drought tolerant as coastal, and does not grow well on soils with greater than 40 inches of sand at the surface.

PLANTING DATES - Planting dates are 9/1 - 6/1. Fall planting is usually best along the Gulf Coast. Be aware that winter plantings are prone to freeze damage, if weather briefly warms and seeds germinate prior to killing frost.

PLANTING RATE - Drilled or broadcast 15 pounds PLS per acre.

PLANTING DEPTH - $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep.

SEEDBED PREPARATION - For a prepared seedbed, disk 3-6 inches deep, allow to firm from rainfall or by rolling.

LIME AND FERTILIZER - Optimum pH range is 5.5-7.0, bahiagrass is not recommended for soils

with pH higher than 7.0. Nitrogen (N) application will vary depending upon site conditions and intensity of management. For pasture or hayland, a moderate level of production can be attained with a 50 Lb/Ac N application in April and a 50 Lb/Ac N application after each grazing cycle or hay cutting. Other nutrients should be added, as needed, according to a current soils test. If lime, phosphorous, potassium, or other nutrients are needed before planting, incorporate them during seedbed preparation.

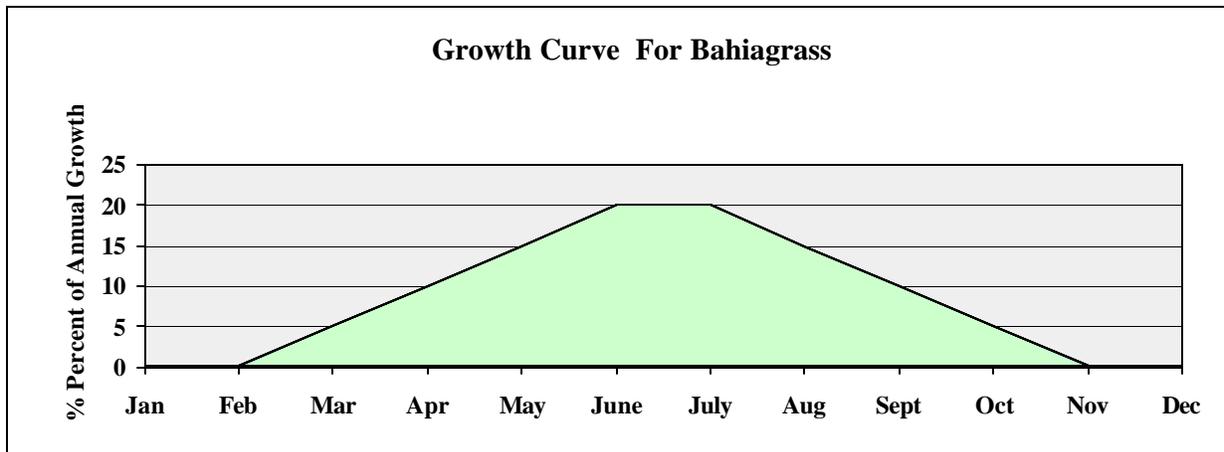
PLANTING METHODS - Bahiagrass can be drilled with a grass seed drill or broadcast with a broadcast seeder. The soil should be firmed with press wheels, cultipacker, or roller during or immediately after planting.

MANAGEMENT - Protect from grazing until plants are well rooted, and not easily pulled up by livestock. Control weeds to reduce competition. Do not use herbicides until a majority of the plants are at least 6 weeks old, or have attained the 4-leaf stage. Follow all label directions when using herbicides. Graze lightly the first season, and no shorter than 3 inches. After establishment, bahiagrass should not be grazed until it is 4 inches tall, and it can be grazed to 2.5 inches in a rotational system. Hay may be cut to a 2.5-inch height. Grazing should be on approximately a 21-28 day schedule. Hay should be cut at early boot to bloom stage.

Comparison of Bahiagrass Varieties

Pensacola	Long narrow leaves, cold tolerant throughout East and Southeast Texas. Adapted to a wide range of soils, optimum pH range 5.5 - 7.0. Not recommended on soils with > 40" of sand at surface, unless in an area of > 55" of annual rainfall. Performs better than coastal on wet sites, but not as drought tolerant as coastal.
Argentine	May establish quicker than Pensacola, wider leaves than Pensacola. Not as much spring growth as other varieties. Produces fewer seedheads than other varieties, not as cold tolerant as Pensacola. Ergot can be a problem on seed of Argentine.
Tifton 9	A selection of Pensacola, released in 1987. Longer leaves and more vigorous seedlings than Pensacola. More palatable, similar digestibility and cold tolerance compared to Pensacola.

Source: Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service.



Actual growth is dependent upon local climate and seasonal variations in temperature and rainfall. Growth curve assumes adequate fertility based on soil test recommendation.

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