



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Conservation Across America

Pasture Planting

Job Sheet – 512



Gordo Bluestem

Gordo bluestem is an introduced warm season perennial bunchgrass which spreads by seed, and can root from nodes or joints. Stems are purplish green and upright, with some tending to lie prostrate the first season. Seedlings are vigorous, root quickly under favorable conditions and can establish a solid stand the first year. Gordo does not start rapid growth until summer, but grows later into the fall than bermudagrass. Very palatable in rotational situations even after dormancy.

Adaptation Best adapted to clay soils in the Southern Blackland, Coast Prairie, and Rio Grande Plains areas of Texas.

Planting Dates Optimum planting dates are from mid-February to mid-April.

Seeding Rate For drilled or broadcast planting the rate is 1.2 pounds PLS per acre.

Planting Depth 0 to 1/4 inch deep

Seedbed Preparation Disk 3-4 inches deep, allow to firm from rain or roll before or during planting. A clean weed free seedbed is essential to good establishment.

Lime and Fertilizer Most of the clay soils in the area of adaptation will not need lime. The pH range for Gordo is 5.5 to 7.5. Nitrogen (N) application should be split with about 30 to 60 Lb/Ac N being applied in late spring and after each

graze down or hay harvest except the last, depending on the level of management, and site conditions. Phosphorus (P), potassium (K), and other nutrients should be applied as needed according to soil test. If P, K, or other nutrients are needed at the time of establishment incorporate them during seedbed preparation.

Planting Method Gordo can be no-tilled into existing cover after burndown, or conventionally planted into a prepared seedbed using a grass drill with depth bands for proper depth control, and seed boxes with agitators to keep seed mixed and prevent fluffy seed from lodging in the box. It is very difficult to broadcast the fluffy seed of the bluestems. If conventionally drilled or broadcast lightly roll after planting to firm the seedbed or press seed into the soil. Mow to control weeds until well established.

Management Allow the stand to become firmly rooted before grazing. Newly established stands should not be cut or grazed closer than 8 inches. Once established Gordo should not be grazed until grass is 8 inches tall, and it can be grazed to 4-6" in a rotational system. Gordo should be grazed on a 25-35 day cycle. It may be cut to a 4 inch height when used for hay. Hay should be cut before boot stage, as quality declines after boot.

Sources: TAES, TAEX, NRCS Technical Guide, and Douglass W. King Seed Co.

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