

# BERMUDAGRASS

*Cynodon dactylon*



## ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION

Introduced from Africa in late 1700's. Major warm season, sod-forming grass of the southern states, western Great Plains and Southwest. Dense tufted, commonly 6 to 24" tall with gray-green basal leaves.

Interspecific hybridization of several species has been an important factor in the development of improved varieties of Bermuda for both turf and pasture use.

## GROWTH HABITS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

Best adapted to relatively fertile soils in the humid southeastern states but also grows in southern part of the central corn-belt states. Giant bermudagrass, found in the irrigated areas in the Southwest, appears to be diploid form of *C. dactylon*; is distinguished from common Bermuda by greater vigor and lack of pubescence.

Bermuda varieties are adapted in clayey to sandy well-drained soils. Tolerates soil salinity and commonly persists on alkaline soils. Good drought tolerance, adapted to hot summer temperatures.

## CULTURE

Drill seed 1/4 – 1/2" deep on firm seedbed or broadcast about same depth. Better establishment in protective cover of non-volunteering crop, stubble or mulch. Plant 11 to 23 lbs. PLS per acre. Plant April to mid-May in central Great Plains, slightly earlier in southern Great Plains and June 15 to July 15 in Southwest. Control weeds and protect from grazing until plants well rooted and seed heads produced.

Some turf varieties are only propagated vegetatively.

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Widely used for pasture, lawns, general-purpose turf, and erosion control. Occasionally used for hay. Some varieties withstand foot traffic very well. Selected varieties cold tolerant in southern Oklahoma. Forage types have been selected for use in the south.

May be grazed continuously all summer or all year long if not overgrazed. However, It should be grazed every 4 to 5 weeks or forage quality tends to drop after 6 weeks.

## IMPROVED VARIETIES

Thirty-eight strains or cultivars listed in 1994 Grass Varieties of the United States USDA SCS Handbook 170. Consult with state or local plant materials specialists for varieties best adapted to specific sites and purposes.

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