

RENOVATING SPORTS FIELDS WITH SEEDED BERMUDA

Sample Schedule - Approximate Dates

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SPRING

- Soil test and apply approximately 50# N/Acre plus the recommended phosphorous, potassium and lime.
- Purchase bermuda seed (Riviera or Savannah). Will need approximately 1# of pure seed/1000 sq ft (50#/Acre). Since most seed is coated and the coating is about equal in weight to the seed, then purchase 2# of coated seed/1000 sq ft (100#/Acre). Go to www.uky.edu/ag/ukturf for other bermuda varieties.
- Aerate with hollow-tine aerifier; holes made on 2-3 inch centers. This may require several passes with a pull-behind type aerifier.

MID MAY

- If field is being converted from tall fescue, perennial ryegrass or Kentucky bluegrass, apply 2 quarts/Acre of RoundUp to kill the cool season grass. Apply the RoundUp at least 2 days prior to seeding.
- If a bermuda field is being seeded to improve bermuda cover in high traffic area, then consider the following:
 - (1) If no serious Poa annua or broadleaf weed problems exist, then you can seed without prior herbicide applications.
 - (2) If Poa annua or other cool season grass is very dense in the targeted area, then consider applying about 1 qt of RoundUp per Acre. This should kill most weeds and will only discolor and delay green-up of residual bermuda that is contacted by the RoundUp. (The recommended rate of RoundUp needed to kill bermuda is approximately 5 Qts/Acre and even then, repeat applications are needed).
 - (3) If broadleaf weeds like chickweed, henbit, clover, dandelion are the dominating weed problems, then you can spray a broadleaf weed herbicide like Trimec Classic one or two weeks prior to seeding bermuda.
- Always prior to seeding, fill surface depressions with new soil. If surface is extremely rough, consider tilling the targeted area, bringing in additional topsoil and preparing a conventional seedbed.

JUNE 1

- Seed bermuda by one of the following methods:

Method #1 - Into a tilled seedbed, broadcast seed evenly and very lightly rake or chain drag surface in order to get good soil:seed contact.

Method #2 - Slit seed targeted area, using a walk-behind power seeder or a tractor operated slit seeder. Some soil surface scarification is needed to get good soil:seed contact, but seed buried more than 1/8 to 1/4" deep will not likely germinate. Pasture renovators can be used but be careful to not bury seed deeply and because the cutting disks are usually 6-8" apart, several passes over the targeted area is usually necessary.

Method #3 - If additional aerification or verticutting of the targeted area exposes mostly bare and loose soil, then consider broadcasting the seed over the surface and lightly chain dragging.

JUNE 1

- Irrigate frequently to maintain surface moisture. This may vary from daily irrigation to light frequent irrigation several times each day, especially on hot, windy days. Best germination is accomplished by keeping the surface soil from drying out during the normal germination period from five days to two weeks.
- Irrigation is not necessary for successful bermuda establishment from seed. However, infrequent rainfall will greatly increase the risk of poor germination and establishment.

JUNE 20

- If crabgrass begins to cover over (shade) the new bermudagrass, spray MSMA at about 1 lb ai/Acre if new grass is only a few days old, or at 2 lbs ai/Acre if new grass is growing and is 2-3 weeks old. Repeat with 2 lbs ai/Acre after 7 to 10 days. Additional MSMA repeats may be necessary in July or early August. Most broadleaf weeds will also be controlled with MSMA. However, if broadleaf weeds begin to dominate the young seedlings, then consider applying a herbicide such as Trimec Classic.
- Wait until most seed has germinated before reducing irrigation frequency. Apply nitrogen (N) as suggested above, every 2 to 3 weeks until seedlings start to mature and stolons begin to develop and fill-in the canopy. As bermuda cover approaches 90%, stop N applications to allow bermuda to harden off before cold weather.

JUNE 30

- As some of the new bermuda grows above approximately 1 inch high, begin mowing at approximately one inch; because of nitrogen forced growth, a mowing frequency of 2 to 3 times per week may be required.

SEPT 1

- Raise height to 1.5 inches or higher. Additional mowing may not be needed.

OCT - DEC

- **DO NOT** overseed with perennial ryegrass the first fall following establishment. This is especially true when using seeded bermuda, or if less than 100% coverage is achieved.
- Apply approximately 80 lbs of K₂O er Acre (130 lbs/Acre of muriate of potash, 0-0-60)