

Bermudagrass

In the Southern Piedmont and Coastal Plain of Virginia, bermudagrass complements cool season forages by providing summer growth.

- Introduced warm season perennial
- Fills in by surface runners (stolons) and underground stems (rhizomes)
- Drought tolerant
- Well suited for fall interseeding with winter annuals (annual ryegrass)

Hybrid bermudagrass (Midland, Tifton 44 for example)

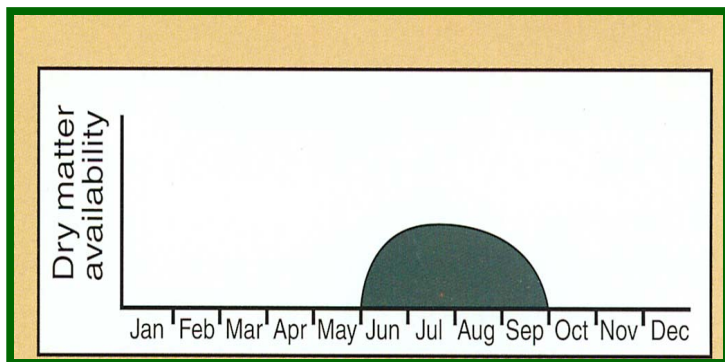
- Must be “sprigged” - live plant material planted into soil
- Requires special machinery
- Somewhat more winter hardy than seeded varieties

Seeded bermudagrass

- Established with seeds; easier than sprigging
- Less winter hardy than hybrid
- Research at Southern Piedmont AREC is determining adaptability to VA



Bermudagrass characteristics

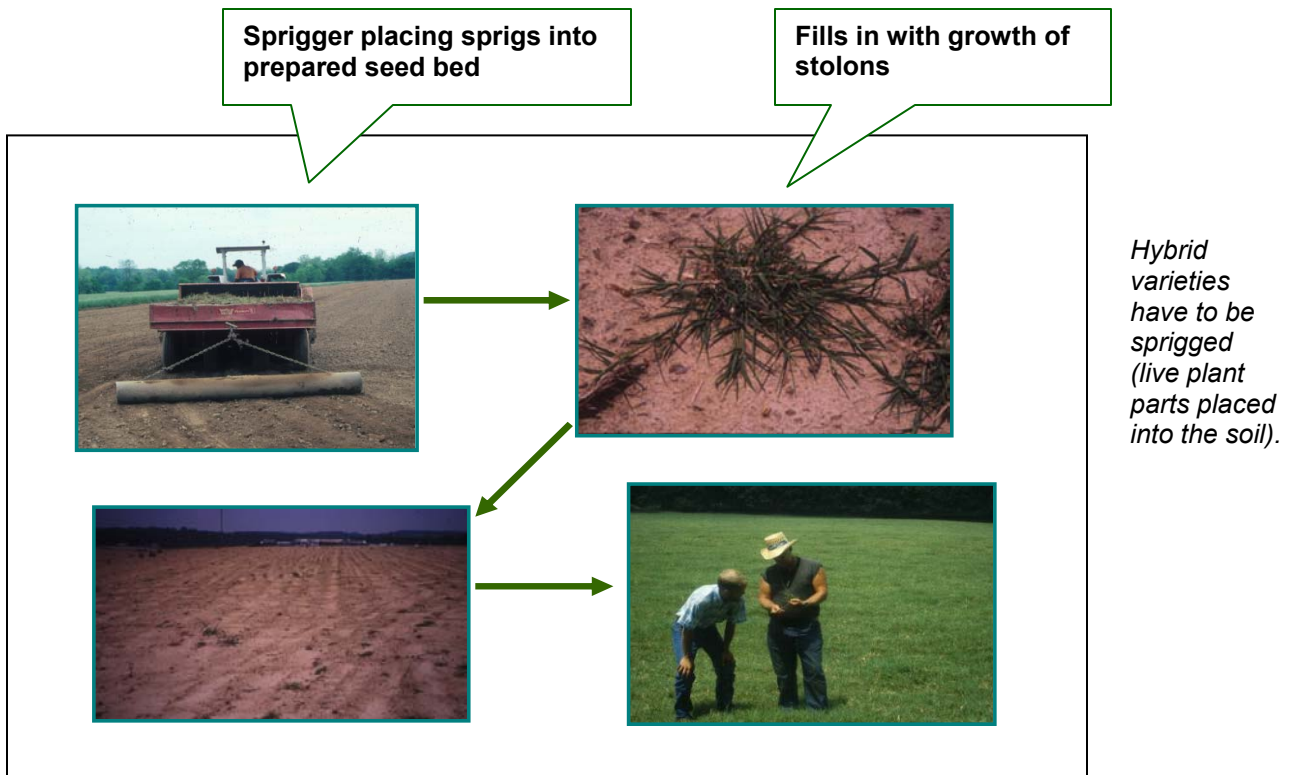


Generalized Growth Curve for Bermudagrass

The growth curve can be manipulated by timing of N application and irrigation. Interseeding of winter annuals allows late winter – early spring grazing.

Source for graphics and photos: [A Guide to the Common Forages and Weeds of Pastures](#), MU Extension, University of Missouri - Columbia

Close rotational grazing and adequate nitrogen are necessary to capture the benefits of bermudagrass.



Bermudagrass being established with a sprigger, a machine designed to place live plant parts into conventionally prepared seedbed.

Establishment:

pH: 6.0 – 6.5

Fertility: P and K according to soil test, 30-50 lbs N/Acre after bermudagrass begins to grow (applying N at planting encourages weed competition).

Soil: all types but prefers well drained soils; better suited to sandy/droughty soils

Date: April 1 – June 1

Rate: Sprigs

With a sprigger, at least 20 bushels of sprigs/A

Broadcast sprigs: 30-40 bushels/acre

Cover with 2 to 4 inches of soil

Seeded: 5-10 lbs of pure live seed/A at 1/4-1/2" depth

Management:

Permit to become well established before haying in first year.

Harvest for hay at 12-15 inch height with intervals of 45 days or less.

Rotationally graze; begin at 4-6" and end at 1-2".

Keep vegetative for acceptable quality.

Split apply 30-50 lbs N/Acre after each harvest for improved yields and quality.