Turf In South Texas

"Measured" Management Practices for Predictable Turf Quality"





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Urban Agriculture?

Urban Agriculture is the creation, growth, introduction and management of constructed landscapes designed to support and enhance natural environmental systems and a sustainable quality of life through mitigation of land altering activity.

The Georgia Urban Agriculture Council



Turf has:

- ✓ Landscape Ornamental Benefit
- Recreational Use Benefit Footing, surface characteristics and resiliency for safety
- Functional Benefit Soil erosion control (protects soil resource), Dust stabilization, Heat Dissipation, Noise abatement, Glare reduction, Reduced runoff loss of precipitation, Higher groundwater recharge Increased degradation of organic chemicals, Safety in vehicle operation, Facilitates security for key installations, Reduced fire hazard, Reduced problems with pests (insects, snakes, rodents), Economic importance







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Take Home Message?

Give Turf A Chance! Have a lawn to your liking!



Turned off sprinkler system and left town for months so her lawn would kick the bucket. Then she painted it! - a form of Yard Art!



"Acceptable" levels for Turf Quality varies with each home consumer's lawn grass, expectations and site conditions.



Turfgrass Management

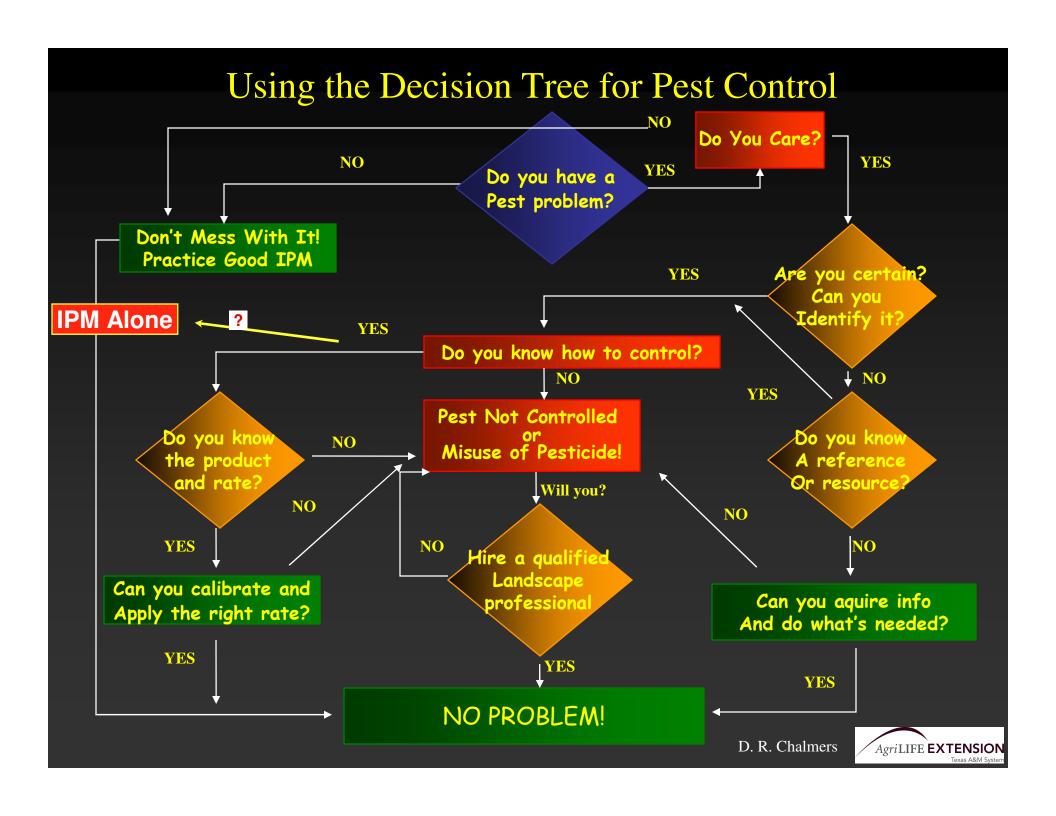
Often a complex subject for the home consumer!

- Your turf has is not looking too good!
- Could you correctly diagnose the problem?
- Could it be a pest or some other problem?
- Can you figure it out?
- If it was a pest could you treat to prevent?
- What are your options in how to go about it?
- Can you get this done in a timely manner?
- ✓ What information do you need?









Scouting & Diagnostic techniques

To determine if decline is biotic, or caused by other factors?

- Visual characterization of the site
- turfgrass community symptoms
- foliar symptoms
- using the soil probe
- Lab tests
- Analysis of the cultural program



Is this the right order? After the fact... or before?



"Leaf texture" is based upon the width of leaf blades. The coarser the blades the coarser the lawn texture. Below are the relative ranking of lawn grass types (species) for leaf texture.

St. Augustinegrass

Coarse Texture

Centipedegrass

Medium Leaf Texture

Zoysiagrass (lawn types)

Common Bermudagrass

Buffalograss

Bermudagrass (some seeded and Vegetative lawn types)

Improved vegetative bermudagrass types

Zoysiagrass (fine textured types - typically higher maintenance)

Seashore paspalum

Fine Leaf Texture



Common Reasons for Poor Turf Quality

- Species and/or variety not adapted
- Improper establishment
- Mismanagement
- ✓ Lack of cultivation (thatch & soil)
- Pests
- Mistakes in pesticide use
- Excessive use/traffic



Controls of Turf Quality

✓ Inherited Characteristics (Species/cultivar)

- pests (disease, insects, nematodes)
- wear tolerance & recuperative potential
- environment (heat, cold, drought, shade, salinity)

Surrounding environment

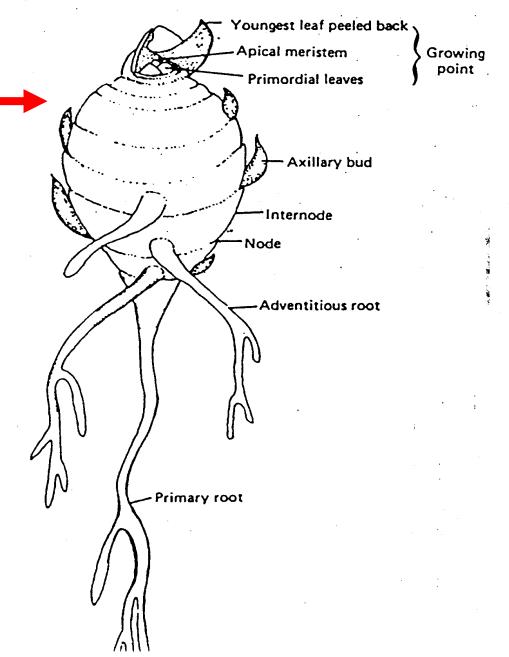
- soil
- microenvironment (shade, light, temperature, drainage)
- use (seasons and amount)
- intensity of culture (water, nutrients, soil aeration, thatch control, traffic)



Diagram of a Crown

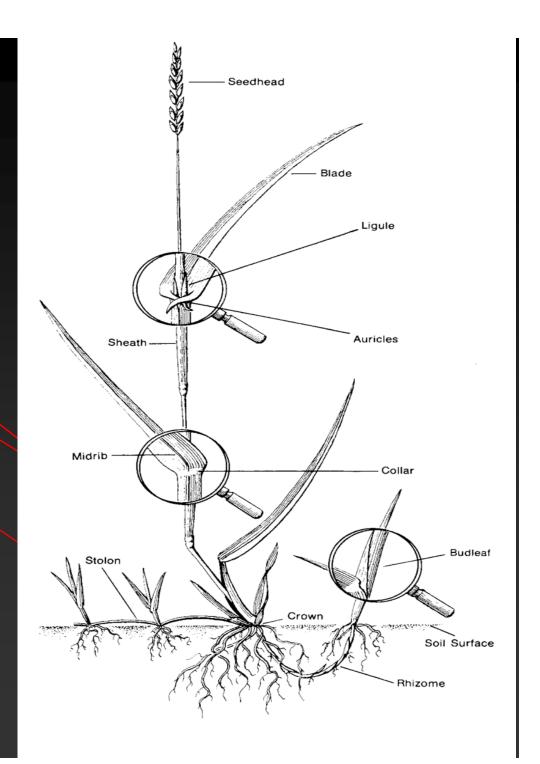


Seedlings mature to form the crown



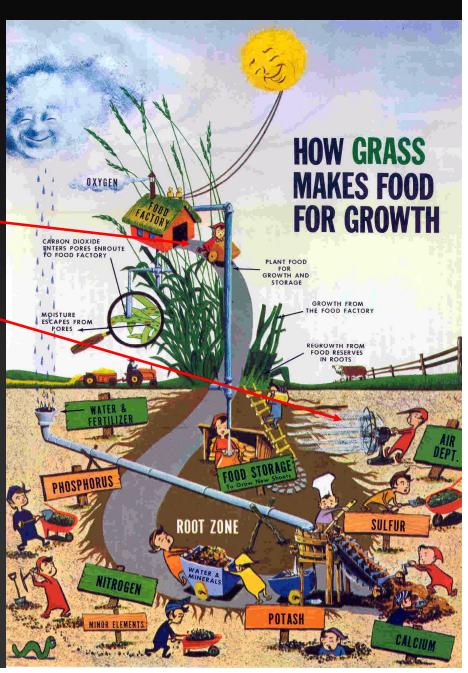
The Turfgrass Plant

- Crown
- Rhizome
- ✓ Stolon
- ✓ Tiller
- ✓ Leaf
- Sheath
- ✓ Node
- Seedhead



Root growth originates from the crowns

- ✓ Up to 90 % of the weight of the turfgrass plant is in the roots.
- Root meristems use carbohydrates from photosynthesis
- Roots need oxygen in the soil to take up nutrients and water.
- Roots are in various stages of development. As they age they mature, cease their function, die back and then break down and add to the soil organic matter.
- Turfgrasses have efficient fibrous root systems.
- Root growth & depth is best in deep soils & non-compacted soils



Turfgrass Growth & Development

- ☐ Growth = irreversible increase in size
- Development = change in form, structure and complexity.
 - vegetative (seedling to mature plant)
 - -reproductive flower
 and seed =
 inflorescence



Root:Shoot Ratio - Want good roots! Conditions extreme reduce rooting! Influenced by:

- ☐ High temperatures
- Close cutting
- Excessive nitrogen
- Low light
- Compaction (less oxygen/mech. resistance)
- Soil: depth, poor soil mixture
- Excess soil moisture (irrigation/drainage)
- Pests (insects, nematodes, root fungi)

What do we mean when we say a grass is "adapted"?

- ✓ The grass type (species) and variety is truly adapted to <u>climate and use</u> meaning that it performs well with "normal" maintenance.
- ✓ Practical Take Home Message: The lawn will persist with modest effort and input (nutrients, water, good soil drainage, adequate sunlight and !
- Examples of lawn grasses:
 - St. Augustinegrass, bermudagrass, zoysiagrass and centipedegrass in east Texas where annual rainfall is greatest.
 - Buffalograss in areas where rainfall is 20 inches or less.
 - Note while the above grasses do well in lawns only bermudagrass and to some extent zoysiagrass recover from traffic damage well enough to be adapted for sports turf

Growth Habit: stolons & rhizomes

Nitrogen requirement: 2 - 6 lbs of nitrogen/1000 ft²/year

Drought tolerance: very good

Shade tolerance: require full sun - not

shade tolerant

Mowing height: 0.75 to 2 inches

Thatch: (thatch control may be needed)

Winter overseeding: may be done to provide "winter color".

Varieties: improved varieties are most traffic tolerant. Differ in leaf texture. And maintenance.

Adapted to: most all of Texas - more irrigation required the further west it is grown.

Bermudagrass

Used most commonly as a low to high maintenance lawn or sports turf.





Bermuda

Common drought tolerant, easy to establish by seed.

Tifway 419 is an improved variety that is vegetatively established. Used extensively on sodded Football and Baseball fields.

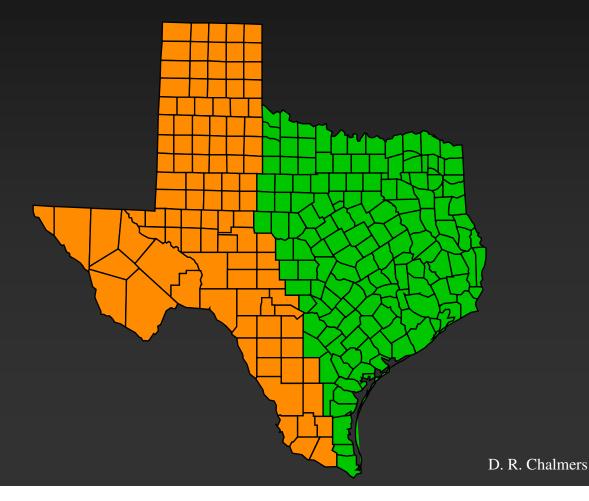
FloraTex TM is one of the Bermudas developed in Texas and Florida and is an improvement over the common varieties and has a medium texture that is not as fine as the Tif varieties and requires less fertilizer and has better drought resistance. This variety is vegetatively planted and used in finer lawns.

Bermudagrass Adpatation

Adapted in these areas

Higher maintenance required (supplemental irrigation and/or additional cultural practices)

Not adapted in these areas. Other grass types are recommended.





Bermudagrasses vary in texture and density





Tifway 419 type hybrids require higher maintenance than common-types (closer and frequent mowing, more fertilizer, etc.)





Leaf textures of bermudagrasses varieties available as seed (S) or as vegetative (V) varieties that do not produce viable seed.

- Medium textured bermudagrass varieties
 - Tifway 419 (V), TifSport (V), Baby (V), GN1 (V), Texturf 10 (V), Princess (S), Riviera (S), Midlawn (V), Patriot (V), Celebration (V)
- Somewhat coarser textured bermudagrass varieties
 - Transcontinental (S), Savannah (S), Southern Star (S),
 Sydney (S), Majestic (S), Blue-muda (S), Blackjack (S),
 Pyramid (S), Numex-Sahara (S), Shangri-la (S), Jackpot (S), Shanghai (V), Arizona Common (S), native common types.
- ✓ Note: the availability of grass varieties differs greatly with region of the state whether purchased as seed or as sod.

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Bermudagrasses in Marketplace - 2008

- ✓ Examples of seeded bermudagrasses include (but are not limited to): Arizona Common, Blackjack, Bluemuda, Contessa, Jackpot, LaPaloma, Majestic, Mohawk, NuMex Sahara, Panama, Princess 77, Pyramid, Pyramid, Riviera, Savannah, Shanghai, Shangri-la, Southern Star, Southern Star, SR 9554, Sunbird, Sundevil II, Sunstar, Sydney, Transcontinental, Veracruz, and Yukon
- Examples of hybrid or vegetative bermudagrass available from Texas sod producers include, but are not limited to: Baby, Celebration, Common, GN-1, Tifgreen sometimes referred to as "328", Tifway sometimes referred to as "419", TifSport, and Tiffeentenses

Growth Habit: stolons

Nitrogen requirement: 2 - 6 lbs of nitrogen/1000 ft²/year

Drought tolerance: good, irrigation to persist central and west Texas

Shade tolerance: best shade tolerant warm season grass & does well in full sun.

Mowing height: 2 to 3 inches

Thatch: (thatch control may be needed with high N rates)

Winter overseeding: may be done to provide "winter color".

Varieties: not many to choose from.

Adapted to: used mainly as a lawn grass, salt tolerant. See map at right for where it can be grown in Texas.

St. Augustinegrass

Most commonly used as a low to high maintenance lawn.



St. Augustine

- Common varieties are still the only ones grown in the Texas areas. The main common variety has developed natural adaptations on its own.
- Raleigh came from North Carolina and was developed to withstand the cooler temperatures, finer textured, SAD resistance and more shade tolerant. It forms a dense, thick coverage.
- Floratam is similar to the first two with the difference being it will not stand the colder weather and must be grown in the lower sections of Texas and can handle full sun or shade.

St. Augustine

Seville is a dwarf variety that was developed for shorter stems and therefore a finer texture with the smaller blades, chinch bug infestation and SAD resistance. It is another one that is not cold hardy.

Palmetto is a newer variety used extensively in South Florida.

Delmar is an improved variety with excellent cold and shade tolerance

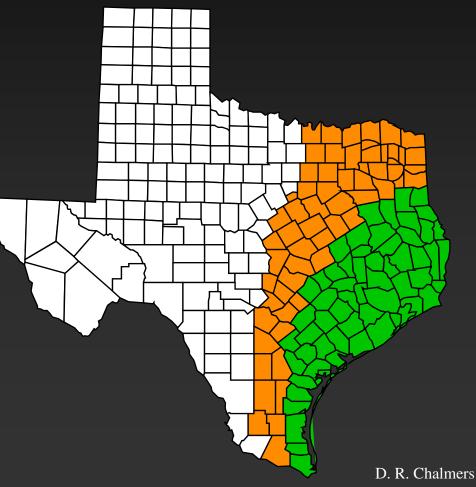
St. Augustinegrass Adaptation

Adapted in these areas

Higher maintenance required (supplemental irrigation and/or additional cultural practices)

Better adapted grass available

St. Augustine has been used for lawns in Central And West Texas. It will persist with higher maintenance and as a grass alternative to using groundcovers in shaded sites. However, More drought tolerant grasses persist with less irrigation





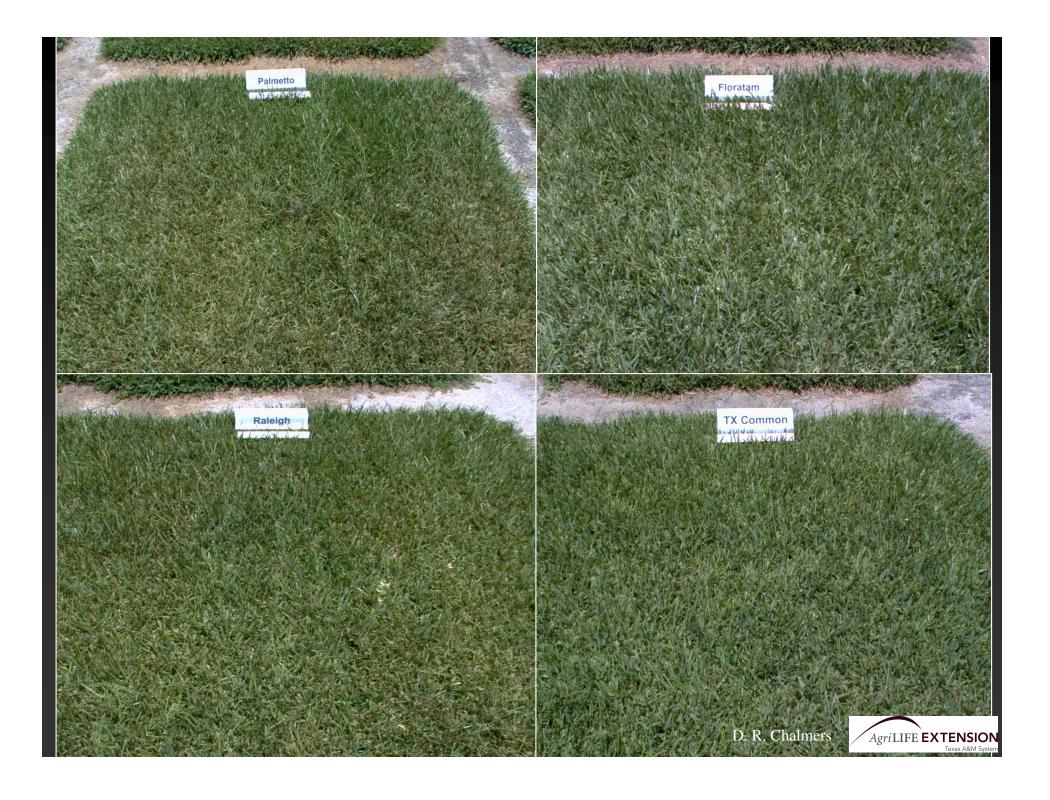
- No seeded types available (only vegetative establishment by sod, stolons or plugs)
- ✓ Fast spreading growth allows for recovery from damage.
- Common insects: chinchbug,
- Common problems:
 - SAD (St Augustinegrass decline virus), Brown patch, Take-all Root Rot
- Varieties: Texas common,
 Raleigh*, Floratam*, Seville,
 Delmar. Palmetto.
- Winterkill can be a problem in north Texas
- ✓ Best soil conditions: moist,soil pH between 6.5 7.5

More St. Augustinegrass Basics!

Stolon of St. Augustinegrass









Brown Patch

St. Augustinegrass Common disease problems...



Growth Habit: stolons & rhizomes

Nitrogen requirement: 1-3 lbs of nitrogen/1000 ft²/year

Drought tolerance: very good

Shade tolerance: can tolerate a moderate amount of shade

Mowing height: 1 to 2 inches

Thatch: common problem with higher nitrogen rates and frequent irrigation

Winter overseeding: very difficult - not advised.

Varieties: most vegetatively planted, few seeded types

Adapted to: Better cold tolerance than bermudagrass. See map at right for where it can be grown in Texas.

Zoysiagrass

Used most commonly as a low to moderate maintenance lawn.



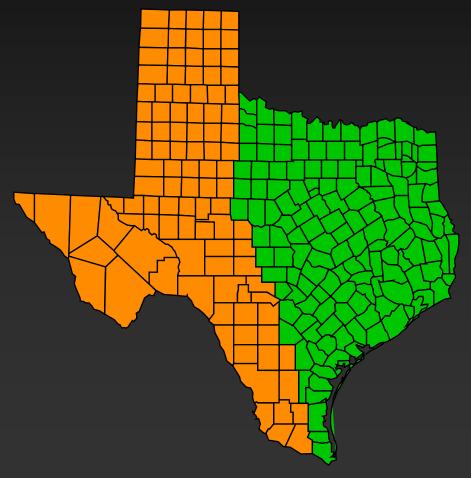


Zoysiagrass Adaptation

Adapted in these areas

Higher maintenance required (supplemental irrigation and/or additional cultural practices)

Not adapted in these areas.





✓ Common issues:

- sod cost is typically 2 to 3 times more than other grasses;
- need to sharpen mower often for good cut
- ✓ <u>Varieties</u>: most vegetatively planted, very few seeded turf-types
- Acceptance: Zoysiagrass has gained in acceptance in recent years with improved varieties and recognition as being a dense low to modest maintenance lawn with a finer texture than St. Augustinegrass (see picture to right)
- Zoysiagrass from seed: Seeded turftype zoysiagrass may take as long as 8 to 12 weeks to cover (much slower to establish than other seeded grasses).

More Zoysiagrass Basics!







- Vegetative Lawn Types (Zoysia japonica): Crowne, El Toro, Empire, GN-Z, Jamur, Meyer, Palisades
- Seeded lawn type: Zenith
- Higher maintenance types (not for lawns)
 - (Zoysia matrella) Cavalier, Diamond, Empress, Royal,
 Zeon
 - Zoysia japonica x tenufolia: Emerald



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Growth Habit: stolons

Nitrogen requirement: 1 to 2 lb of nitrogen per 1000 ft²/year

Drought tolerance: poor to fair, irrigate in drought

Shade tolerance: can tolerate a light shade

Mowing height: 1 to 2 inches

Thatch: usually not a problem with this low maintenance lawn

Winter overseeding: not advised.

Varieties: Common or Tiff Blair can be planted as sod or seed (slow to establish from seed)

Adapted to: Eastern Texas, prefers moist slightly acidic (pH of 4.5-5.5). See map at right for where it can be grown in Texas.

Other: iron chlorosis concerns, centipedegrass can decline with higher fertility

Centipedegrass

Used most commonly as a low maintenance lawn.



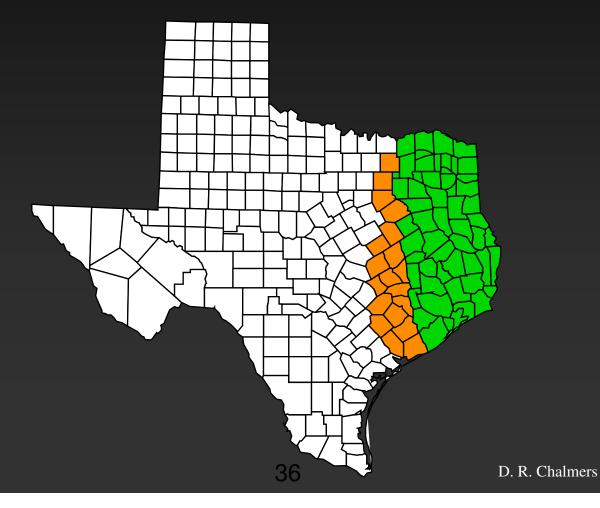


Centipedegrass Adaptation

Adapted in these areas

Higher maintenance required (supplemental irrigation and/or additional cultural practices)

Not adapted in these areas.





Growth Habit: stolons

Nitrogen requirement: 1 - 2 lbs of nitrogen/1000 ft²/year

Drought tolerance: excellent

Shade tolerance: not shade tolerant

Mowing height: 1 to 3 inches if mowed

Thatch: not likely to thatch

Winter overseeding: not recommended

Adapted to: best at <20 to 25 inches of annual precipitation (infrequent and minimal irrigation). In Eastern Texas higher rainfall enables other grasses and weeds can out compete buffalograss.

Varieties: Vegetative (V) or seeded (S), Prairie(V), Stampede (V), 609(V), Texoka (S), Common (S), Density (V), Tech Turf (V)

Other: Expect relatively low turf quality compared to other types

Buffalograss

Most commonly used as a low maintenance lawn in dry areas.



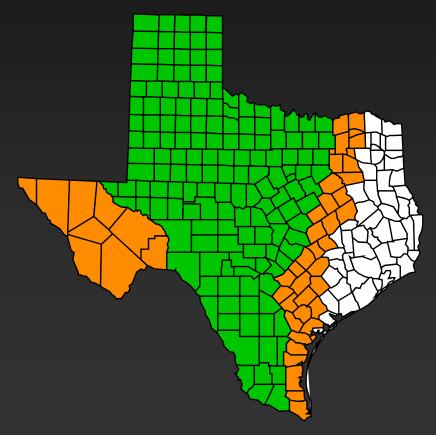


Buffalograss Adaptation

Adapted in these areas

Higher maintenance required (supplemental irrigation and/or additional cultural practices)

Not adapted in these areas.



Comparing Buffalograss and Zoysiagrass on a golf course in San Antonio, Texas:

Creeping bentgrass putting green

Zoysiagrass primary rough

Buffalograss Perimeter Rough



Seashore paspalum

Use is not yet common. Suited as a moderate to high maintenance lawn or sports turf.

- ✓ Growth Habit: stolons and rhizomes, textures (fine to coarse) vary with variety.
- Nitrogen requirement: 2 to 5 lb of nitrogen per 1000 ft/year
- ✓ Drought tolerance: very good, tolerates irrigation with salty water.
- ✓ Shade tolerance: full sun to partial shade
- ✓ Mowing height: 3/4 to 2 inches (varies)
- ✓ Thatch: can be a problem
- ✓ Winter overseeding: not advised.
- ✓ Varieties: vegetative planting, not available as seed.
- Adapted to: See map at right for where it can be grown in Texas. Lack of cold tolerance limits use.





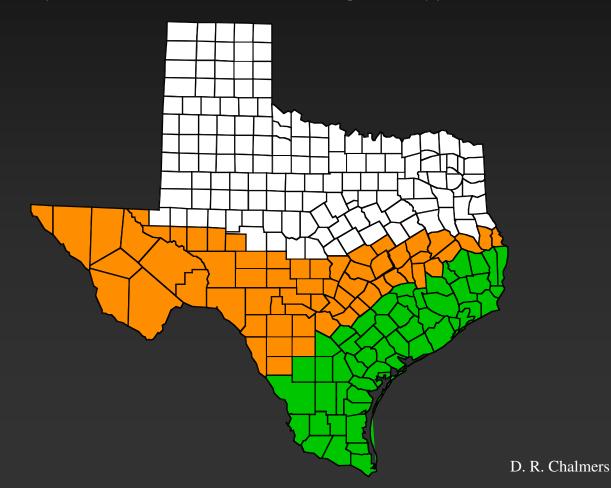


Seashore Paspalum Adaptation

Most adapted in these areas

May require supplemental irrigation, appropriate variety selection and/or higher maintenance)

Not adapted in these areas. Other grass types are recommended.





Growth Habit: short compact rhizomes, somewhat open canopy with low inputs.

Nitrogen requirement: 1 to 2 lb of nitrogen per 1000 ft²/year

Drought tolerance: very good to excellent

Shade tolerance: poor

Mowing height: 3 to 4 inches

Thatch: usually not a problem with this low, maintenance utility-type turf

Winter overseeding: not advised.

Varieties: Common, Argentine, Pensacola, and Paraguay (Texas bahia) can be planted as sod or seed (slow to establish from seed)

Adapted to: South to Mid-Texas. Not cold hardy.

Other: sharp mower required - tough to cut. Seed stalks detract from turf quality.

Bahiagrass

Used more as a low maintenance roadside turf but seed can invade fine turf as a weed.



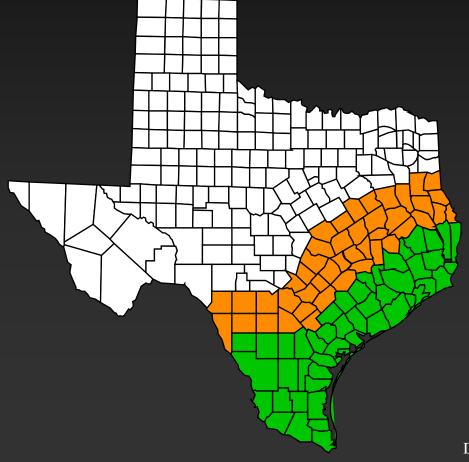


Bahiagrass Adaptation

Most adapted in these areas

Better adapted grasses available.

Not adapted



SHADE TOLERANCE Ranking of Turfgrasses

Highest



- **∠** Fescue, Red
- **∠**St. Augustinegrass
- **Z**oysiagrass
 - Seashore Paspalum
 - Tall fescue
 - Centipedegrass
 - Buffalograss
 - Bentgrass, Creeping
 - -Bluegrass, Kentucky
 - -Ryegrass, Perennial
 - Bermudagrass



Turfgrass Producers of Texas Members A through H

MEMBER PRODUCER	S	Г. А	\U(GU	ST	INI	C]	BE	RM	UL	ΟA						ZO	YS	SIA				BU	FFA	LO	*ADDITIONAL VARIETIES*
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DIAMOND TURF																												
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GRASSLAND																												
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HANSEN FARMS				•	•	•			•	•					•	•			•									
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HOPE PLANTATION TURF																												
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HUVAR FARMS						•			•						•													

Turfgrass Producers of Texas Members K through Z

MEMBER PRODUCER	ST. AUGUSTINE									BE	RM	UL	ΟA			ZOYSIA										FFA	LO	*ADDITIONAL VARIETIES*
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LARRY VIKTORIN FARMS					•										•			•	•									Centipede
LONE STAR SOD FARM L. P.						•			•						•													
MATAGORDA DEVELOPMENT						•				•					•		•											
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QUALITY TURF FARMS						•						•		•	•													
RED'S GRASS FARM						•				•					•													
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SOUTH TEXAS GRASS																												
STARR TURFGRASS																												
STONE TURF FARMS						•				•																		
T-8 GRASS FARM																												
TEXAS GRASS FARMS						•				•					•		•				•							
TRI-TEX GRASS														•	•					•			•					See Website for more varieties
TRIANGLE TURF CO., INC.					•	•						•			•						•							
TRINITY TURF NURSERY, INC.									•					•	•						•							TifDwarf Bermuda, Tifton 10 Bermuda
TURF OF TEXAS																												
TURFFALO																												Turffalo Buffalo
TURFGRASS AMERICA	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•		•	•	•		•	•			•			•		•	•	See Website
TWINWOOD, INC.		•				•																						Centipede
UNRUH TURF FARMS																												
VGT SOD, LP		•			•	•			•	•					•		•	•	•									Centipede
WHARTON TURF-GRASS		•		•	•	•			•	•					•	•					•							Crowne Zoysia
WITTIG GRASS SALES		•		•			•		•	•		•		•	•	•		•			•							Crowne & Royal Zoysia, Centipede



How To Get NTEP Reports & Info

Kevin Morris, Executive Director

National Turfgrass Evaluation Program

10300 Baltimore Ave. Bldg. 001, Rm. 245

Beltsville Agricultural Research Center-West

Beltsville, Maryland 20705

NTEP Website: http://ntep.org/



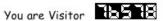
" Providing Results of National Testing of all Major Turfgrass Species"

Please read this before entering:

These pages are funded by the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) for distribution of information on the testing and adaptation of the major turfgrass species. The National Turfgrass Evaluation Program encourages the proper and ethical use of data found in these pages. Data and comment found on this site should not be referenced out of context, nor should a cultivar's performance be elevated beyond supporting NTEP data.

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Take Home Message?

Give Turf A Chance!
Have a lawn to your liking!

