TURFGRASS VARIETY DEMONSTRATION

Victoria County Master Gardeners, Cooperators, 2007
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SUMMARY:

Two turfgrass varieties or cultivars planted from seed and nine sodded in 2007 were managed as a typical lawn yard. During their first year of growth, they were visually evaluated with Palmetto St. Augustinegrass and the common Bermudagrass varieties performing the best. More intensive evaluations will be conducted in 2008 and beyond.

OBJECTIVE:

To evaluate the characteristics and adaptability of numerous types of recommended turfgrasses for home and commercial lawns.

MATERIALS and METHODS:

Nine turfgrasses were planted by sod and two were planted by seed in late spring of 2007. Prior to planting, the existing site was sprayed with Roundup herbicide to kill vegetation. Seven to ten days after spraying, the soil was tilled with a rotor tiller and 2-3 inches of compost was incorporated over each site. Plots were approximately 180 square feet and were leveled prior to planting. Sods were laid out end to end, rolled and watered immediately.

The common Bermuda seed and the Princess 77 seed were broadcast at the rate of five pounds of seed per 1000 square feet.

Varieties were monitored for growth rate, color, beauty, and heat, disease and insect tolerance by Victoria County Master Gardener volunteers.

RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS:

All St. Augustinegrasses, Bermudagrasses and Zoysiagrasses have developed a dense turf in the first year of growth. The Buffalograss is not as dense, but the coverage is adequate.

Diseases were minimal except for suspected brown patch disease in two St. Augustinegrass varieties, Floratam and Raleigh. Weed infestation in the Buffalograss and Bermudagrass sites was an initial problem, but spraying with MSMA herbicide helped control the problem.

During the late 2007 winter season, most turfgrasses were dormant or semi-dormant, except for the Palmetto St. Augustine which has maintained the greenest color. After less than one year of evaluation, there are some differences that are unique for certain grass families as well as varieties, but overall, all varieties have performed well. Each variety has a different maintenance schedule with the dwarf Bermuda grasses requiring the most frequent mowing. There are also differences in leaf texture, density of the turf, and disease resistance.

Selection of a well-adapted pest free turfgrass will add years of trouble free, high aesthetic value landscape and pleasure to your environment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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Table 1. Evaluation of recommended turfgrass varieties. Victoria County Master Gardener Association, Victoria County Texas. 2007.

Turfgrass Name	**Turfgrass Type**	**Turfgrass Donated By**	**1st Year Evaluation**
Princess 77	Bermuda	Seeded (purchased)	Good
Common	Bermuda	Seeded (purchased)	Very good
Celebration	Bermuda	Grimes Grass Co.	Good
Grimes EXP	Bermuda	Grimes Grass Co.	Good
Density	Buffalo	Bladerunner Farms	Not as dense stand
Jamur	Zoysia japonica	Bladerunner Farms	Good
Palisades	Zoysia japonica	Rod Farms	Good
Empire	Zoysia japonica	Rod Farms	Good
Raleigh	St. Augustine	Midway Grass Farm	Good
Floratam	St. Augustine	Midway Grass Farm	Good
Palmetto	St. Augustine	Rod Farms	Very good