2017

Home Lawn Seeding Mixtures and Timing Trial

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Home Lawn Seeding Mixtures and Timing Trial

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**Introduction**

Many lawn care professionals and homeowners debate when is the best time to establish a yard in Iowa, and how much more work and inputs it will take if planted at the wrong time of year. Additionally, so many different turfgrass species are sold that a side-by-side comparison of seed mixtures and planting dates are needed. The objectives of this study were to compare turfgrass seed that is locally, commercially available and commonly used, and planting timings. This is the first of a two-year study.

**Materials and Methods**

Research was conducted at the Iowa State University Horticulture Research Station. The ground was cleared of all vegetative cover before planting with a nonselective herbicide (glyphosate).

The experimental design was a two by six factorial design. Two planting dates will be used (October 4, 2016 and Spring 2017) with six seed mixtures or species (Pennington Smart Seed Sun and Seed; Scotts Turf Builder Grass Seed Sun and Shade Mix + Watersmart Plus; Scotts Turf Builder Grass Seed Landscapers Mix; Sta-Green Sun and Shade Mix; 5 Iron Perennial Ryegrass; and Gulf annual ryegrass).

Each treatment was planted following proper seeding rates on the label with a slit seeder for maximum seed-to-soil contact. Plot size is 4 ft by 31 ft.

Because establishment times are already known for each turfgrass species used, digital image analysis (DIA) will be performed to track the cover of green tissue throughout the summer. These pictures will be collected weekly and the data will be used to track turfgrass performance and color throughout the summer.

Additional data collected will include the number and type of weeds in each plot, the presence of turfgrass diseases, and overall visual turfgrass quality on a one-to-nine scale, with one being poor and nine being excellent. A visual turfgrass quality of six or better is deemed acceptable.

**Results and Discussion**

Data will be taken starting May 2017 after the spring planting date.
**Table 1. Plot map of home lawn seeding mixtures and timing trial.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plot 112 5 Iron P Rye Spring Planting</th>
<th>Plot 212 Sta-Green Mix Fall Planting</th>
<th>Plot 312 Gulf Annual Ryegrass Fall Planting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plot 111 Scotts Landscape Mix Spring Planting</td>
<td>Plot 211 Scotts Turf Builder Mix Fall Planting</td>
<td>Plot 311 5 Iron P Ryegrass Fall Planting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plot 110 Pennington Mix Spring Planting</td>
<td>Plot 210 Scotts Landscapers Mix Spring Planting</td>
<td>Plot 310 Gulf Annual Ryegrass Spring Planting</td>
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<td>Plot 209 Scotts Turf Builder Mix Spring Planting</td>
<td>Plot 309 5 Iron P Ryegrass Spring Planting</td>
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