



2019-20 Virginia Turfgrass Variety Recommendations

Mike Goatley, Turfgrass Specialist, Virginia Tech

Whitnee Askew, Research Associate, Virginia Tech

Thomas Hardiman, Virginia Crop Improvement Association and Virginia Tech

The Maryland-Virginia Turfgrass Variety Recommendation Work Group meets annually to consider the previous year's data from Virginia and Maryland National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) and ancillary trials and to formulate these recommendations. Virginia and Maryland variety recommendations are essentially identical except for specialized grasses and research situations that differ due to adaptation and state regulation. To qualify for this recommended list turfgrass varieties: 1) must be available as certified seed or, in the case of vegetative varieties, as certified sprigs or sod; 2) must be tested at sites in both Virginia and Maryland; 3) must perform well, relative to other varieties, for a minimum of two years to make the list as a "promising" variety and for three years to make the "recommended" category. All test locations in Virginia and Maryland are considered in making these recommendations. The Virginia Crop Improvement Association (VCIA) will accept the turfgrass blends or mixtures listed below in the VCIA Sod Certification Program. All seed or vegetative material must be certified and meet minimum quality standards prescribed by the VCIA. Many seeding specifications (for municipalities, counties, state and governmental agencies, landscape architects, and professional organizations) state that varieties used for turfgrass establishment must come from this list and that blends or mixtures follow the guidelines for certified sod production. Specifications for state highway seeding can be developed separately and may require some species and/or varieties not normally recommended for uses other than roadside seeding. Seed availability may vary between turf seed suppliers. Some species and varieties may have limited adaptation.

Kentucky Bluegrass – Individual varieties selected must make up not less than 10%, nor more than 35% of the total mixture on a weight basis. All varieties must be certified. Selections can be made from Category I alone or various combinations of Categories I and II. Kentucky bluegrasses listed as "Promising" (Category II below) can account for no more than 35% of the blend by weight).

Category I – Recommended Kentucky Bluegrass Varieties (65–100% of blend by weight). Aries, Blue Bank, Blue Coat⁴, Blue Note, Bolt⁴, Endurance⁴, Full Back, Hampton, Legend⁴, Midnight, Noble, Shannon, SPF30, and Skye.

Category II – Promising Kentucky Bluegrasses (10–35% on a weight basis). Apollo H2O, Barserati, Barvette, Conquistador, Crest, Dauntless, Deja Blue, Delta Blue, Desert Moon, Endurance, Haromine, Heidi, Jackrabbit, Keeneland, Mercury, Mystere H2O, Orion, Ridgeline¹, Rhapsody, Sombrero, SPF30, Spitfire, Tejas, Valley View, Volt¹, and Wildhorse¹. (Ridgeline, Volt and Wildhorse are only for mixing with tall fescue for mixed species sod production).

Tall Fescue –Both recommended and promising varieties can be used in the VCIA Sod Certification Program.

Category I – Recommended Tall Fescue Varieties (90–100% on a weight basis). 4th Millennium SRP⁴, Annapolis⁴, Avenger II, Black Tail⁴, Bloodhound, Bladerunner II⁴, Bullseye, Catalyst⁴, Crossfire 4⁴, Embrace⁴, Falcon V⁴, Fantasia⁴, Fayette, Firebird 2⁴, Firecracker SLS⁴, Foxhound⁴, Gazelle II, Gold Medallion, Grande 3, Guardian 41⁴, GTO⁴, Hemi, Hot Rod⁴, Hounddog 8, Inferno¹, Integrity¹, Justice, Leonardo, Maestro, Meridian⁴, Michelangelo, Mustang 4, Penn RK4, Raptor III, Rebel IV, Rebel V, Rebounder, Reflection, Regenerate, Rendition RX¹, Rockwell, Rowdy, Saltillo, Screamer LS⁴, Speedway⁴, Spyder LS, SR 8650⁴, Sunset Gold¹, Supersonic⁴, Technique⁴, Temple⁴, Terrano⁴, Thor⁴, Titanium 2LS, Titan Rx, Trinity⁴, Turbo, Turbo RZ, Turfway⁴, Valkyrie LS⁴, Wichita⁴, Xtender⁴, and Xtremegreen¹.

Category II – Promising tall fescue varieties (may be 90–100% of the mixture on a weight basis): AST 7003, AST 9003, Birmingham, Firewall, Lifeguard, Maestro, Monument, Moondance, Moondance GLX, Paramount, Persuasion, Pro Gold, Rain Dance, Six Point, Springwood, South Fork, and WATKINS.

Kentucky bluegrass varieties recommended for mixing with tall fescue sod to enhance sod strength (10% standard, up to 15% of the seed mixture by weight is possible for certification): All cultivars in Categories I and II above.

Bermudagrass – Varietal differences in texture and winter hardiness are important considerations. If no notation follows the variety name this indicates it has performed in the top statistical category at both Blacksburg and HRAREC in Virginia Beach. Varieties with the notation # are only recommended in Virginia's warmest regions due to cold tolerance concerns. No guarantees can be made regarding any bermudagrass cultivar's winter survival in the transition zone, as damage to any cultivar is possible in an extreme winter.

Category I – Recommended vegetatively propagated bermudagrass varieties: Celebration[#], Latitude 36, Northbridge, Patriot, Premier Pro brand (variety name is Premier), Tahoma 31, TifTuf, and Tifway[#].

Category II – Promising vegetatively propagated bermudagrass varieties: Iron Cutter.

Category III - Recommended seeded bermudagrass varieties: Princess-77^{#,3}, Riviera³, and Yukon³.

Category IV – Promising seeded bermudagrass varieties: Arden 15, Monaco, Rio, and SWI-1070.

Zoysiagrass – (Varietal differences in texture and winter hardiness are important considerations.)

Category I – Recommended vegetatively propagated zoysiagrass varieties: Meyer and Zeon

Category II – Recommended seeded zoysiagrass varieties: Zenith

Perennial Ryegrass – (not for use in sod production) Use certified seed.

Category I – Recommended perennial ryegrass varieties: Apple SGL, Banfield, Benchmark, Fiesta 4, Grand Slam GLD, Homerun, Karma, Line Drive GLS, Octane⁴, Soprano, and Stellar 3 GL.

Category II – Promising perennial ryegrass varieties: Alloy, All Star 3, Apple 3GL, Evolve, Gray Fox, Gray Wolf, Homerun LS, Infusion, Intense, Manhattan 6 GLR, Monsieur, Palmer Elite, Pop, Seabiscuit, Shield, Signet, Silver Spot, Slugger 3GL, Umpqua, and Xcelerator.

Fine Fescues – For general use in low maintenance areas or in partial to full shade. Promising varieties have limited performance data or availability as certified seed. Neither blending varieties nor mixing species have been studied extensively in MD or VA and limited research does not indicate any advantage to blending or mixing varieties from the different fine fescue species listed. Use only certified seed.

Creeping red fescue – Recommended varieties: None at this time. **Promising:** Seamist.

Chewings fescue – Recommended: Radar¹. **Promising:** Compass II, Momentum.

Hard fescue – Recommended: Beacon, Gladiator, Jetty, Minimus, Resolute, and Sword. **Promising:** None at this time.

Sheep fescue – Recommended or promising: None at this time.

Kentucky bluegrass varieties recommended for mixing with fine fescue sod to enhance sod strength (up to 10% of the seed mixture by weight): All cultivars from Kentucky bluegrass Categories I and II.

Varieties marked with superscript notations denote the following:

(¹) to be considered for removal in 2020 due to declining performance relative to other varieties.

(²) to be considered for removal in 2020 due to declining seed quality.

(³) to be considered for removal in 2020 due to the absence of recent testing of certified seed lots in MD and VA.

(⁴) to be considered for removal in 2020 due to lack of recent testing in MD and VA.