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SUWANNEE BERMUDA GRASS FOR DEEP SANDS 1/

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Suwannee Bermuda grass is a hybrid designed to grow on deep sands at moderately low fertility levels. On such soils with annual applications of 50 pounds of N per acre or less, it should produce 10 to 20 percent more than Coastal Bermuda. Like Coastal Bermuda, Suwannee will grow tall enough to cut for hay or silage. It compares favorably with Coastal in palatability, disease resistance, and drought resistance. In a four-year grazing test on a very sandy soil at the Range Cattle Station at Ona, Florida, Suwannee Bermuda produced 13% more beef than Coastal Bermuda or Pensacola Bahia grass.

Better farmers agree that it pays to fertilize their improved pastures. Research shows you can't afford not to fertilize. This being true, the efficiency of the grass in recovering and using the fertilizer applied is very important. The grass that will produce the most feed per pound of fertilizer and recover the highest percent of the fertilizer applied is the most efficient. Generally, it will be the best grass to grow.

In 1952 Suwannee Bermuda growing on an oak ridge sand recovered in the hay removed an average of 76.0% of the nitrogen applied. Coastal Bermuda, Pensacola Bahia, and common Bermuda in this same test recovered 67, 67, and 25%, respectively, of the N applied when only 50 pounds of N were applied. When 200 pounds of N were applied, they recovered 65, 41, and 43%, respectively, of the nitrogen. These results indicate that Suwannee Bermuda, the most efficient of the grasses studied, should be the best choice for deep sands.

On most soils in Georgia, Coastal Bermuda is superior to Suwannee. Coastal becomes established faster, recovers better after turning, stands closer grazing, makes a denser sod, and competes better with weeds and other grasses than Suwannee Bermuda. Coastal Bermuda will produce more on the heavier soils than Suwannee will produce on deep sands. Thus, Coastal Bermuda is still the best choice for most of Georgia.

Suwannee Bermuda will be released in small quantities in mid-summer of 1953 to people who qualify as certified growers. There will be little available for general farm planting until 1954.

Remember — if you have deep sands or scrub-oak land that you intend to put in pasture, Suwannee Bermuda appears to be your best choice. It was designed for you.

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