

Some plant growers are using tomato seed planters for seeding Bahia grass. These planters have the extra advantage of drilling the seed and placing fertilizer in the drill about one to one and one-half inches below the seed. (Seed should not come in direct contact with the fertilizer.)

First Year Management

Bahia grass seedling plants are rather small and weak when they first come up. Success in establishing a grass sod will be largely determined by weed control. Plantings made on new ground always develop fast because of the absence of weeds.

Crabgrass is the most aggressive competitor of all the common weeds. It is a fast grower and tends to form a dense mat when mowed. Ragweeds, pursley, Jerusalem weed, and cockle bur are all troublesome weeds but can be controlled by repeated mowings. A canopy of weed cover should not be allowed to form over the young grass during the first year. Mowing should be repeated about every two weeks during the first year until the grass is well established. Once established, the Bahia grass can suppress most weeds until only one or two mowings per year is necessary.

Cattle should not be allowed on a new planting of Bahia grass during April, May, and early June because trampling will destroy many young grass plants. Grazing after June is beneficial in that it helps control crabgrass and pursley.

The following is a step-by-step procedure which proved very satisfactory in 1952 in establishing 30 acres of Bahia grass:

1. Applied 300-pound rate 2-12-12 on February 8 and 9 and cut into the soil with tandem harrow set to run shallow.
2. Planted 12-pound rate Bahia grass seed with cultipacker seeder on February 13 and 14.
3. Mowed April 16.
4. Mowed June 2.
5. Top-dressed with 25-pound rate of N per acre June 12 and mowed.
6. Turned 20 head of cattle on 30 acres June 18.
7. Mowed July 1.
8. Top-dressed with 33-pound rate of N July 18.
9. Mowed July 20.
10. Mowed August 16.