



2023-24 Virginia Turfgrass Variety Recommendations

Authored by Michael Goatley, Jr. Professor and Extension Turfgrass Specialist; Whitnee Askew, Research Associate; Thomas Hardiman, Virginia Crop Improvement Association, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech.

Introduction

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 (Figure 1). 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.

For further information on variety performance in Virginia and Maryland, consult specific species data at www.ntep.org.



Figure 1. Replicated variety trials are conducted for up to 6 years in various locations across Virginia and Maryland in order to identify the best performing turfgrass cultivars in the challenging environmental conditions of the Mid-Atlantic.

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).

After Midnight, Aries⁴, Babe, Bluebank⁴, Blue Coat, Blue Note, Bolt, Endurance, Full Back⁴, Hampton⁴, Legend, Midnight, Noble⁴, Pivot, Selway, Shannon⁴, Skye, SPF30⁴, Starr, Tirem, United, and Yellowstone.

Category II – Promising Kentucky bluegrass varieties (10-35% on a weight basis).

Acoustic, Amaze, Barserati, Barvette, Blue Devil, Blue Gem, Blue Magic, Bombay, Cloud, Dauntless, Electric, Finish Line, Jersey, New Moon, Nurush, Orion, Syrah, Twilight, Volt1, and Wildhorse1. (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 SRP, Annapolis, Avenger II⁴, Avenger III, Birmingham¹, Black Tail, Bloodhound⁴, Bullseye¹, Bullseye LTZ, Catalyst, Crossfire 4, Daybreak, Degas, Dragster, Dynamite G-LS, Fantasia, Fastlane, Fayette, Firebird 2, Firecracker G-LS, Firecracker SLS, Firehawk SLT, Firenza II, Firewall⁴, Gazelle II⁴, Gold Medallion⁴, Grande 3, GTO, Guardian 41, Hemi, Houndog 8⁴, Inferno⁴, Integrity⁴, Justice⁴, Lifeguard, Maestro, Michelangelo, Monument, Moondance GLX, Mustang 4⁴, Paramount, Penn RK4⁴, Pro Gold, Raptor III, Rebel IV⁴, Rebel V⁴, Rebel XLR⁴, Rebounder⁴, Reflection, Regenerate, Rendition RX⁴, Rockwell, Rowdy⁴, Saltillo⁴, Screamer LS, Serenade, Spyder LS⁴, Spyder 2LS, SR 8650, Standout⁴, Stealth, Sunset Gold⁴, Supersonic, Symphony, Technique, Temple, Thor, Titanium 2LS, Titanium G-LS, Titan Rx⁴, Trinity, Turbo⁴, Turbo RZ⁴, Valkyrie LS, Wichita, and Xtremegreen⁴.

Category II – Promising tall fescue varieties (may be 90-100% of the mixture on a weight basis).

Battle Hawk, Bentley, Bladerunner 3, Bonfire, Bravo 2, Capitan, Clash, Endgame, Essential 2, Estrena, Extravaganza, Fairfield, Falcon Supreme, Finelawn Supreme, Galactic, Gallardo, GLX Aced, GLX Revive, GRO_PRO, Hellcat GLR, Houndog 9, Kizzle, Lafayette, Matisse, Motif, Naturally Green, OKeefe, Oriole, Padre 2, Providence, Raceway, Raptor LS, Rover, Rowdier, SR 8700, Talladega II, Tank, Teacher, Titan GLX, Titan Max, Tough, Triad, Valsetz, Xanadu, and Zion.

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. Varieties with the # are only recommended in Virginia’s warmest regions due to cold tolerance concerns.

Category I – Recommended vegetatively propagated bermudagrass varieties:

Celebration[#], Iron Cutter⁴, Latitude 36, Northbridge⁴, Patriot⁴, Tahoma 31, TifTuf (DT-1), and Tifway[#].

Category II – Promising vegetatively propagated bermudagrass varieties:

Celebration Hybrid.

Category III – Recommended seeded bermudagrass varieties:

Princess-77^{#,3}.

Category IV – Promising seeded bermudagrass varieties:

Astro, Monaco, Rio, Sunqueen, and SWI-1070⁴.

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:

Zenith⁴.

Perennial ryegrass

Not for use in sod production, use certified seed.

Category I – Recommended perennial ryegrass varieties:

Apple 3GL, Apple SGL, Benchmark, Big League, Fastball 3GL, Grand Slam GLD, Homerun, Karma, Slugger 3GL, Soprano, Stellar 3 GL, Stellar 4GL, and Superstar GL.

Category II – Promising perennial ryegrass varieties:

Black Pearl, Gray Fox, Infusion, **Shield**, Sideways, **Signet**, Silver Spot, SR 4650, SR 4660ST, and Wicked.

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 or promising varieties:

None at this time.

Chewings fescue – Recommended varieties:

Compass II and Radar⁴.

Chewings fescue – Promising varieties:

Brittany 2 and Radar II

Hard fescue – Recommended varieties:

Beacon⁴, Gladiator, Jetty⁴, Minimus⁴, Resolute, and Sword⁴.

Hard fescue – Promising varieties:

Beacon II, Sword II, and Tenacious

Sheep fescue – Recommended or promising varieties:

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 in Categories I and II above.

Varieties marked with superscript notations denote the following:

- ⁽¹⁾ to be considered for removal in 2024 due to declining performance relative to other varieties.
- ⁽²⁾ to be considered for removal in 2024 due to declining seed quality.
- ⁽³⁾ to be considered for removal in 2024 due to the absence of recent testing of certified seed lots in MD and VA.
- ⁽⁴⁾ to be considered for removal in 2024 due to lack of recent testing in MD and VA.

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