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## Seeded zoysia shows promise in lower transition area

[Golf Course News](#), [Nov 2002](#) by [Overbeck, Andrew](#)

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. -- Purdue University is working in conjunction with the University of Kentucky to study the viability of seeded zoysia grass in the lower transition zone. The results so far are promising, according to Purdue's turfgrass extension specialist Zachary Reicher.

"We are in our third full year of research here," said Reicher. "We think zoysia is the best overall choice for fairways and tees in the lower transition area from Kansas to Maryland because of its ease of maintenance. It also requires less inputs and it survives the winter better than bermudagrass."

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Research has focused on the best approaches to seeding zoysia, specifically studying the best timing and rates and when herbicides can safely be applied. Work is also being done to determine the best method of converting cool-season turf to zoysia.

With seeded varieties, more courses could get the benefits of zoysia without the initial expense. Previously, zoysia has been only widely available as sod, sprigs or strips. Seeded zoysia costs \$1,500 to \$2,000 an acre compared to \$15,000 for sod and \$5,000 for strip sod.

According to Tim Bowyer of Patten Seed Co., which is supplying the studies with its Zenith seeded zoysia grass,

there is now a ready supply of seeded zoysia on hand.

"Before it was a inventory issue," said Bowyer. "Now we can produce the volume of seeded zoysia that the market needs. But there has been no work done on seeding it because it has traditionally been all plugging and sodding. It can give lower-end golf courses something that exclusive golf courses have used for years."

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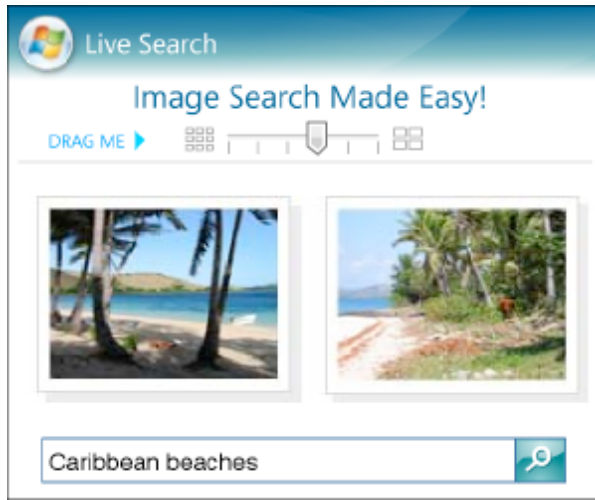
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The data collected so far shows that the best time to seed zoysia is between May 15 and July 1. After 10 weeks, there is 100 percent coverage and the turf is playable. The best rate is between one to two pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet, and the first herbicide application, depending on the product used, can be made as early as two weeks after seeding.

For the conversion of ryegrass and bluegrass, Purdue has conducted field trials and also worked with four golf courses in Indiana and Kentucky.

"We found that overseeding existing fairways doesn't work well, even at high rates of seed," said Aaron Patton, a graduate student working with Reicher. "The best move is to treat the area with Roundup, prepare a seedbed and put down seed."

Patton and Reicher plan to spend another year doing more herbicide studies and Patton will continue on to study which varieties are most resistant to zoysia patch.

"At this point," Reicher said, "we have enough answers so superintendents can make an educated decision about whether to choose or convert to zoysia."

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