

TURFAX™

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JB COMMENTS

I have been receiving a number of comments concerning the possible use of seashore paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*) on putting greens. There is one specific concern in this regard. Actually seashore paspalum is a serious weed in hybrid bermudagrass putting greens in areas of South America, such as Argentina. This is because **the local seashore paspalum genotypes have a very rapid vertical leaf growth rate. Thus, by noon following an early morning mowing the greens become very bumpy due to the scattered patches of seashore paspalum that are growing faster than the surrounding Tifdwarf bermudagrass.** For this reason, I do get numerous questions concerning potential herbicides for the removal of seashore paspalum from Tifdwarf bermudagrass. This comment is made as a caution. It is entirely possible that cultivars of seashore paspalum can be developed that have a sufficiently slow vertical leaf extension rate to provide putting quality similar to that of the new high-density dwarf hybrid bermudagrasses. 


ASK DR. BEARD

Q *I have three-year-old Tifdwarf putting greens that are rapidly developing patches of off-type bermudagrass. What is the cause?*

A The development of an off-type grass in closely mowed hybrid bermudagrass putting greens is an all too common occurrence. Frequently the blame is placed on the development of mutations. It is true that the hybrid bermudagrasses (*Cynodon dactylon* x *Cynodon transvaalensis*) have a higher tendency to mutate than dactylon bermudagrass (*Cynodon dactylon*). However, it is still a relatively rare occurrence.

In most cases the cause for development of off-types is contamination. Evidence of this is supported by a large experimental putting green at Texas A&M University that I was involved with for 22 years. **It has been in place for 35 years, and is divided into halves consisting of Tifdwarf and Tifgreen. During that time a diverse array of various experiments and turf renovations have been conducted on the surface, yet no off-type problem has developed.**

Actually it takes only a few nodes on scattered stems to produce a significant contamination problem in a putting green. There are a number of potential sources by which contamination can occur.

1. Contamination can occur from the production field where the bermudagrass was originally grown prior to harvesting and transplanting onto the golf course putting green site.
2. Another possible contamination source involves the failure to fully eradicate the existing bermudagrasses from the putting green prior to planting. All too many people attempt to eliminate bermudagrass by the use of glyphosate (Roundup™) which is not a wise choice. Rather the preferred approach is by the use of methyl bromide.
3. Finally, contaminants can be introduced onto the putting greens via various types of turf maintenance equipment and via golf shoes. 

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