

## Egyptian Bermudagrass Strain Has Many Merits

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**U**GANDAGRASS which is a strain of Bermudagrass (*Cynodon dactylon*) is not a newcomer to golf courses. It has been used in Egypt for over 50 years. Its success has proved its practical value for putting greens and fairways. Many observations indicate that Ugandagrass is far superior to the common seeded Bermuda in many aspects. This fine textured grass will compare with the putting qualities of bentgrass or ryegrass. In regions of Mediterranean climate like that of the southwestern parts of the United States, it produces an excellent turf of first rate quality. It is very aggressive and forms a fine dense sod without being spongy.

In the Gezira Sporting Club, Cairo, Egypt, which many believe to have some of the best golf turf in the world, Ugandagrass had been planted about 25 years ago and it has maintained itself against all competition of common seeded Bermuda and weeds. This is due to its rapid growth rates and its quick healing ability when injured.

The good turf of Ugandagrass in the Gezira Club is maintained on a type of soil that is far from being ideal. The soil is very compact; it has layering conditions, irrigated by surface flooding and it has a low fertility level. However, Ugandagrass is growing well in spite of these unfavorable conditions and not because of them.

To secure high-quality turf of Ugandagrass with well-developed deep root system, watering practices should be adjusted to its requirements. This grass is a warm-season grass and needs constant irrigation in moderate quantities during the summer months, which is its active

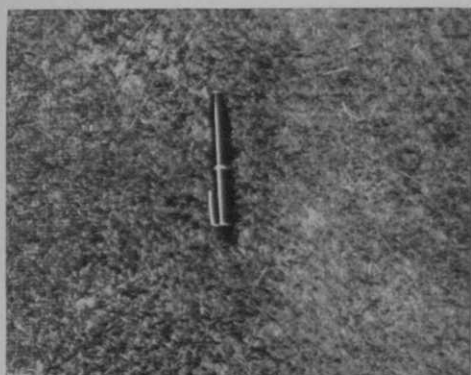
growing period. It grows slowly during periods of low temperatures and cannot be forced into rapid growth by watering. Excess watering during its dormant season in winter will encourage weeds and undesirable types of grass at the expense of Ugandagrass.

Unfortunately this grass has the same undesirable characteristic of other Bermudas, turning a displeasing yellowish brown in winter, but comparatively it has a higher cold tolerance and retains green color longer than common seeded Bermuda when the low temperatures hit. No information is available yet as to the cold resistance ability of Ugandagrass and its aggressiveness compared to that of the new improved strains of Bermuda, like U-3, Everglades and Tifton. Experiments along this line will be of great interest to all regions where Bermuda is used.

High fertility level, especially nitrogen, should be maintained, especially during the spring and summer. Because of the rapid consumption and loss through leaching, nitrogen should be applied periodically, at monthly intervals. The balance of available phosphoric acid and potash to nitrogen should also be maintained, and if soil tests show deficiency of these two major nutrient elements, then measures should be taken to add them to the turf.

Ugandagrass can adjust itself to wide range of soil reaction. It can grow successfully on soils with pH around 5.0, and it is able to tolerate alkaline soils with pH around 8.2. It is growing successfully in Egypt on soils with pH around 8.0. Apparently this alkaline soil accompanied by dry climate are the main factors accounting for Egypt having almost a disease free turf without using any chemicals.

Ugandagrass is a low growing, sod-forming perennial which spreads by creeping stems, either below or at the soil surface. It requires hard brushing and frequent topdressing to prevent undesirable graininess. It is propagated vegetatively since no seed is available. Experiments have to be done to determine the degree of viability of the seeds before propagation by seeds is to be used.



Common Bermudagrass does not invade Uganda.

Fred V. Grau's "Lawn Grass Letters" have won high favor with home lawn owners. Circulation of the bulletin now is in the thousands. Lot of interest to supts. in the letters. If you want to get on the list write Grau at his nursery office, P. O. Box 177, College Park, Md.