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Summarizing Turf Rolling

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ing should not be practiced at a frequency of more than two times per week, in order to minimize the negative effects of turfgrass wear injury. However, turf rolling on a daily basis may be practiced during major tournaments, provided negative turf effects do not appear. Most of the positive and negative turf responses from rolling have involved assessments on creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*). Unfortunately, there have not been comparable studies conducted on bermudagrass (*Cynodon* spp.) to ascertain whether similar turf responses occur.

Other Turf Rolling Functions. The use of the turf roller has other important functions, such as **firming a root zone during site-soil preparation for planting turfgrasses.** The rolling operation itself also allows one to better detect very shallow depressions in the surface, which can then be corrected through additional smoothing operations. Turf rolling also is frequently employed during the turf establishment phase as a **smoothing operation for the turfgrass seedlings or vegetative propagules during the grow-in period.** Finally, it also is valuable **following sod transplanting to provide good contact between the sod interface and the underlying soil.** This ensures a positive soil moisture relationship rather than producing air pockets, where drying of the roots can cause a delay in transplant rooting.

ASK DR. BEARD

Q *Is spring a good time for seeding turfgrasses in the northern contiguous United States?*

A A key factor in timing the seeding of cool-season turfgrasses is the soil temperature. **Optimum temperatures for seed germination of most cool-season turfgrasses are at soil temperatures in the order of 86°F (30°C) during the daytime and 68°F (20°C) at night.** Optimum grass shoot growth occurs at soil temperatures in the range of 60 to 70°F (16–21°C). **Thus, depending on the location, late summer to early autumn is the preferred time for seeding cool-season turfgrasses.** This timing is when temperatures are in the higher range for optimum seed germination and progressing to cooler temperatures, which favor shoot growth, tillering, and lateral stem development for sod formation. In contrast, spring is a period of progressively higher temperatures, which is just the opposite of what is desired. In addition, the late spring–early summer period typically is when numerous annual weedy grasses—such as barnyardgrass, crabgrass, foxtail, and goosegrass—are germinating and can create a highly competitive weed situation. Except for the northern areas of Canada and Alaska in North America, **the preferred time for seeding cool-season turfgrasses is late summer–early autumn, with spring being a distant second choice but better than the midsummer heat and drought stress season.**

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