How’s and why’s (or why not’s) of Dormant Seedings

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Dormant Seedings

- Why
  - Another option
  - Thanksgiving – Easter
  - No delay during spring due to weather
  - Starter fertilizer and herbicides in spring
  - No irrigation

Fundamentals for ALL SEEDINGS

- Right grass, Right place, Right time
- Soil Prep
- Irrigation
  - Weed control
- Mowing-early and often
- Post seeding fertilization

The earlier it covers the easier it gets

Dormant Seedings

- Why not
  - Erodible site
  - Ground is frozen, snow
  - Chance for hard spring frost
  - Wait until late summer or fall

Methods of seeding

Power-Rake/Vertical Mower

- Set to disrupt top ⅛ inch of soil
  - Helps remove small thatch layers
  - Promotes good seed to soil contact
    - Can use before or after seeding or both
**Slit seeding**

- Minimal soil disruption
  - Seed placed directly in slits
  - Best to seed in two directions or more
  - Promotes good seed to soil contact
  - Less prone to erosion

**Aerification**

- Solid tines or Hollow tines?
  - Both will work
  - Hollow tines promote more soil contact
  - More holes the better the seed will take
  - Target a 2 by 2 inch spacing
  - Requires multiple passes with most commercial aerifiers

**Conventional tillage**

- Best suited on level ground
- Great seed bed
- Labor intensive
- Required when grading needed

**Recommended Rates**

- Dormant vs. spring seeding: 10 - 25% higher rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grass Type</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky bluegrass</td>
<td>2.0 - 3.0 lbs/M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tall fescue</td>
<td>6.0 - 9.0 lbs/M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalograss</td>
<td>2.0 - 3.0 lbs/M</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**What we did**

- Three seeding rates:
  - Kentucky bluegrass at 2, 3 or 4 lbs/M
  - Turf-type tall fescue at 6, 9 or 12 lbs/M
  - ‘Sundancer’ buffalograss at 3, 4.5 or 6 lbs/M

- Two seeding dates:
  - November 20 (Dormant seeding) vs. May 1 (Spring seeding)
What we did

• Seeds spread by hand, raked with leaf rake
• Tenacity: May 1 and 4 June at 5 oz/A
• Quicksilver: 20 June at 2.0 oz/A
• Irrigation and fertilizer applied after May 1
• Area mowed at 2.5 inch weekly

Take home messages

• Increasing seeding rates may not be necessary for dormant winter seeding of Kentucky bluegrass, tall fescue or buffalograss.

Take home messages

• Dormant seeding may not perform well compared to spring seeding with late spring frost
Don’t forget about weed control

- Treat it like a spring seeding
- Sooner the better
- Apply herbicides before germination or after

Weed Control Options in Seedings

- Tenacity (Mesotrione)
  - PRE on bare soil
  - Post over turfed areas
  - Crab + Broadleaves + Nutsedge
- Drive XL8 (Quinclorac)
  - Anytime on TF
  - 7 days prior and Post 28 days after emergence on KBG
  - Crab + Broadleaves
- SquareOne (Quinclorac+Carfentrazone)
  - Post 7 DAE
  - Crab+Broadleaves
- Tupersan (Siduron)
  - Crab
  - PRE
- Quicksilver (Carfentrazone)
  - Post
  - Broadleaves
If you decide to dormant seed

- Not necessary to raise rates
- Choose the best seeding method
- Think about spring weed control
- TF is preferred over KBG