

BERMUDAGRASS CONTROL



Utah State University
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

WEBER COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE

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Bermudagrass (*Cynodon dactylon*) is an aggressive grass that becomes a weed in many Utah cool season turfgrass lawns. As a warm-season grass, it is used for turfs and pastures in warm climates where it stays green in the heat of the summer, but goes brown in the early fall, and stays brown until early the next summer.

DESCRIPTION

Bermudagrass is a low growing perennial grass that spreads by rhizomes (root type stems), stolons (stems that root), and seeds. The seed head resembles a hand with three to seven “fingers” or spikelets, which are about one to two inches long.

Bermudagrass is sometimes confused with annual crabgrass. Bermuda has deeper, rhizome type roots, where crabgrass has a shallow, fibrous root system with no rhizomes or stolons. The leaves on Bermudagrass are also in a herringbone pattern.

Bermudagrass’s aggressive behavior makes it a tenacious weed throughout the landscape. It propagates both vegetatively and by seed, so it spreads quite easily from one lawn or area to another. Bermudagrass grows in full sun, and does not do well in shade.

PREVENTION

The best method of control for Bermudagrass is to prevent it from getting established in the landscape. Be certain soil, compost, and seeds brought onto the property are weed-free. Inspect all topsoil or fill before it is delivered. When purchasing plant materials, look around the area to be certain it is clean and weed-free before buying and bringing them into the landscape.

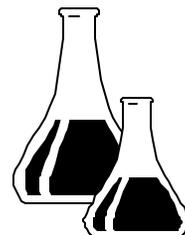
CULTURAL PRACTICES

A good healthy lawn will out-compete Bermudagrass and reduce the likelihood of its establishment. Some cultural practices that help cool season grasses out-compete Bermudagrass include:

1. Mow the lawn 3 to 3 ½ inches tall. Taller lawns shade Bermudagrass and weaken it.
2. Fertilize in late spring and early fall, and avoid fertilizing during the hot, summer months. Bermudagrass is most active during that time, and our cool season grasses slow down their growth because of the heat.
3. Use a heavy mulch in flower and shrub beds. This discourages Bermudagrass, and makes it easier to see and control.
4. Use edging material that goes six inches into the soil to separate flower beds from turf areas. This helps keep Bermudagrass from spreading throughout the landscape.
5. Water deeply and infrequently. Shallow, frequent watering favors Bermudagrass growth.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

Bermudagrass is a tenacious weed, and is often hard to kill using only chemicals. For good control, use a combination of cultural practices, prevention, and chemicals.





The best time to treat Bermudagrass is when it is actively growing. In Northern Utah this usually occurs between late May and early September. Treating when the grass is dormant or inactive is usually ineffective. Most herbicides require more than one application to be successful.

The following chemicals are registered for control or suppression of Bermudagrass. ***Be sure to read and follow all label directions for optimal results.***

TURF AREAS:

1. ***Triclopyr*** (Turflon Ester): This product can be used where most cool-season lawns are grown. It is registered for suppression, and works best if the turf is mowed a little taller and watered deeply and infrequently. Reapply it every four weeks throughout the season, and continue its use more than one growing season, if necessary.
2. ***Fenoxaprop*** (Acclaim Extra): This product is normally applied by a professional. It needs to be applied every four weeks throughout the growing season. It may need to be applied the following year.

TREES, SHRUBS, PERENNIAL BEDS:

1. ***Sethoxydim*** (Grass Getter, Poast): Can be used around most broadleaf perennials, shrubs and trees. Reapply and check areas carefully for several seasons to ensure complete control is achieved. Be certain to read the label for safe use on specific plants before applying.

2. ***Fluazifop*** (Grass-B-Gon, Ornamec Over the Top): Use around most broadleaf perennials, shrubs and trees. Reapply and watch the areas for several seasons to ensure complete control is achieved. Be certain to read the label for safe use on specific plants before applying.

NON-SELECTIVE HERBICIDES

These products will kill or damage all plant materials that they come in contact with, so use with caution. Apply to areas where complete control of *all* vegetation is desired.



1. ***Glyphosate*** (Round-up, Rodeo, Touchdown): Apply when Bermudagrass is actively growing. Two to four applications, three to four weeks apart may be required. It may be beneficial to till the ground ten days after application to allow rhizomes and stolons to begin re-growth before further applications.
2. ***Glufosinate*** (Finale): Apply when Bermudagrass is actively growing. Several applications, three to four weeks apart may be required. It may be beneficial to till the ground ten days after application to allow rhizomes and stolons to begin re-growth before further applications.
3. ***Pelargonic Acid*** (Scythe): This organic herbicide only kills the top part of the plant, and is not translocated throughout the plant like other non-selective herbicides. Because it does not kill the roots, use it along with tilling, and consistent monitoring and pulling. This product requires all season long vigilance to get good control.