

Zoysia

Zoysia grass is a warm season turf that forms a very dense lawn spreading by stolons and rhizomes. Zoysia is very wear resistant, but a slow grower so it does not recover quickly from damage. Zoysia prefers sun exposure, but will tolerate light shade. Its thick and dense turf requires a very sharp mower blade. It prefers to be cut with a reel mower. Zoysia if maintained properly is a high quality, lush lawn.

There are several varieties of zoysia that can be easily confused. Meyer, emerald and zenith are probably the most popular varieties. Mowing height for zoysia is 1-2". Zoysia has a high shoot count and forms a very dense turf under ideal conditions. Thus, the need for a very sharp mower blade or a reel mower. In the shade zoysia may be kept slightly taller. Like most turf grasses zoysia performs best with about 1 inch of rainfall during the growing season. Fertility requirements are less than for bermuda, and for home lawns might be about 2.5 - 3 lbs. of nitrogen per 1000 square feet.

Weed control is best accomplished by using pre-and post-emergent products, following the same guidelines as for other warm season lawns. As always, maintaining a thick dense turf through correct cultural practices aid in control of weeds.

Zoysia is probably most affected by the wet cold winters, and diseases that are a result of less than ideal conditions. Because it is a slow grower it is slow to recover from damage and may take more than one growing season to recover. Limit late season fertilizers, this helps with spring green up.



Meyer zoysia, also called "Z-52" has medium-coarse leaf texture, good cold tolerance and spreads more rapidly than most other zoysias. It is susceptible to nematode damage and is discouraged where nematodes are a problem (typically nematode problems are more common in sandy soils).

Belaire is also an improved variety noted for its excellent cold tolerance and medium green color. It has a coarser leaf texture and faster rate of establishment than Meyer. It is susceptible to large patch disease.

El Toro is a relatively new zoysia variety that was developed in California and looks like Meyer. It is the fastest growing zoysia, tolerates mowing with a rotary mower and produces less thatch than Meyer. It also has an improved cold tolerance and a better cool-season color. El Toro has an earlier spring green up and more shade tolerance.

Palisades zoysia has a medium-coarse leaf texture with an upright growth habit. This upright growth allows for mowing heights from 3" down to 1/2" for applications such as golf tee boxes. Due to the aggressive rhizomes of this cultivar, it will thrive in a wide variety of soil types. Palisades is suitable in areas with full sun to partial shade.

Zenith is a medium-coarse leaf textured zoysia that is available as seed. It is well suited to the home lawn, although the seeded varieties of zoysia do not perform as well overall as do the vegetative cultivars. Zenith is planted in late spring to early summer with a seeding rate of 1 to 2 pounds of seed per 1000 square feet.

Compadre zoysia is wear tolerant and can be used on golf courses, athletic fields (baseball, softball and soccer), lawns and parks. In the south, Compadre has good shade tolerance while in the cooler areas it needs more sun. Compadre is a popular grass for the coastal areas due to its increased tolerance for salt spray. It is also extremely tolerant of high salt concentrations in both irrigation water and soil. Compadre zoysia is available as seed.

Emerald zoysia is a fine-textured hybrid that is the most attractive zoysia. It is well-suited for top-quality lawns where a good maintenance program is provided. Emerald zoysia has less winter hardiness, but more shade tolerance than Meyer. Emerald has a dark green color, very fine leaf texture, and good shade tolerance. Emerald also has high shoot density, and a low growth habit. Emerald will develop excess thatch rather quickly if over-fertilized, and is prone to winter damage.

Zeon is another fine-textured zoysia that provides a thick, dark-green lawn. Zeon has good shade and drought tolerance.

Royal zoysia is distinguished from other zoysia grasses by its fine texture, high rhizome and tiller density. Royal exhibits excellent salt tolerance, shade tolerance, and rapid regrowth and recovery from damage.

Geo zoysia is a fine-textured turfgrass with dark green color. The feel of the grass is very soft, and it can be mowed to 1 inch with a reel mower or to 2 inches with a rotary mower. It is used on sports fields, golf courses, and for residential lawns. Geo is also known for excellent shade tolerance.

Cashmere zoysia resembles emerald in appearance and texture. Cashmere has good shade tolerance, but lacks cold tolerance.