

# Timing of Zoysia Seeding

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**Goal:** Demonstrate two approaches to seeding zoysia: high-input in Northern Illinois compared to low-input in Southern Illinois.

**Northern Location:** Number 3 teebox (farthest from green) on Sunshine Course in Lemont.

Rationale: At first thought, zoysia would not be useful in a northern teebox because it lacks the capacity to recover from damage during dormancy early in spring and late in fall. With further thought, however, there would be an advantage in having a zoysia teebox for every hole to be used during summer when it becomes difficult to maintain quality teebox turf with cool-season grasses. Zoysia thrives in heat and repairs divot damage with stoloniferous growth.

**Southern Location:** Newly constructed pond dam near Carbondale, Illinois

Rationale: At highly erodible constructed sites a grass is needed that can establish on poor soil and provide uniform density in preventing erosion. In most cases seed is simply broadcast with no subsequent care. Seed mixes typically used for utility turf consist of species that germinate fast, but don't have any spreading ability. After two years such sites composed mainly of weeds. Zoysia seed germination is as rapid as that of tall fescue, and it has the added features of spreading ability with low nutrient requirement, which is critical for eventual full cover.

## Materials and Methods:

Lemont: High Input: Seedings previous to this study at Lemont indicated the critical need for heat in obtaining ready seed germination. Five treatments were therefore chosen for this experiment to address the entire, warm, growing season, May to September. Irrigation was supplied as needed.

Carbondale: Low Input: Five treatments were chosen for that experiment to address the warmer climate and possibility of dormant seedings compared to spring and summer seedings to take advantage of spring soil moisture. Irrigation was not used.

Plots are 5 x 5 feet arranged as a randomized complete block design with four replications. Seed of 'Zenith' were broadcast by hand at 3 lb. per 1000 sq ft. Since zoysia seed require light to germinate, the seed were not raked. The plots are maintained at 1.5-inch clip. Percent cover per plot is estimated visually.

## Results:

Data in Table 1 show that stands can be obtained that will provide nearly complete cover by the end of the growing season. Irrigation is necessary and fertilizer speeds the growth.

Data in Table 2 show that simply broadcasting seed onto a prepared seed bed during the fall/winter/spring dormancy, with no further inputs, will provide thin stands that will take two years of spreading for complete cover. Summer seedings fail with this approach.

Table 1. Percent cover of zoysia at Lemont  
according to month of seeding.

<u>Month of Seeding</u>	<u>% Cover, 8/18/11</u>
May	44
June	21
July	5
August	
September	

Table 2. Percent cover of zoysia at  
Carbondale according to season of seeding.

<u>Month of Seeding</u>	<u>% Cover, 8/18/11</u>
October 2010	8
January 2011	18
March, 2011	10
June, 2011	0
August, 2011	