

# University of Maryland

# Agronomy Mimeo

## Agronomy Department

### TUFCOTE BERMUDAGRASS

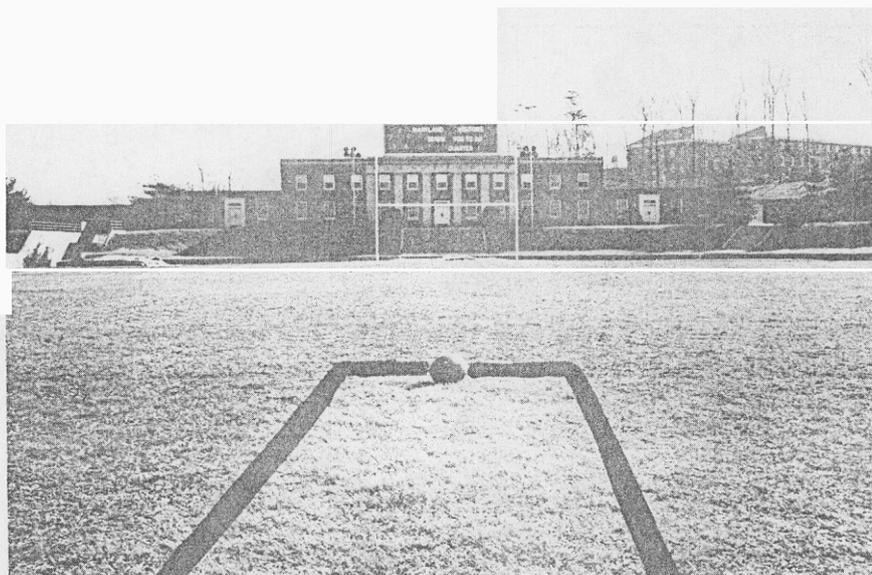
By

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Tufcote Bermudagrass was released in 1962 cooperatively by the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station and the Crops Research Division of the U.S.D.A., A.R.S. and the National Plant Material Center of Soil Conservation Service, Beltsville, Maryland. It was originally named "Tuffy" but because this name is a registered trade mark for a certain grass seed mixture, it can not be used for this Bermudagrass.

Tufcote Bermudagrass is a variety developed from a single seedling introduced by General Jan Smuts from Pretoria South Africa in 1942. During this first winter in the United States, the several strains introduced by General Smuts were subjected to natural winter conditions of  $-17^{\circ}\text{F}$ . This plant was the only one to survive and was selected by F. J. Crider at the National Plant Materials Center, Soil Conservation Service, Beltsville, Maryland for increase. Tufcote was further increased and tested by K. B. Thornton. Conservation plantings were made at a number of locations. Tufcote was further evaluated in turf plots at the U.S.D.A. Plant Industry Station and in the Byrd Stadium at the University of Maryland.



TUFCOTE BERMUDAGRASS ON 50 YARD LINE OF BYRD STADIUM

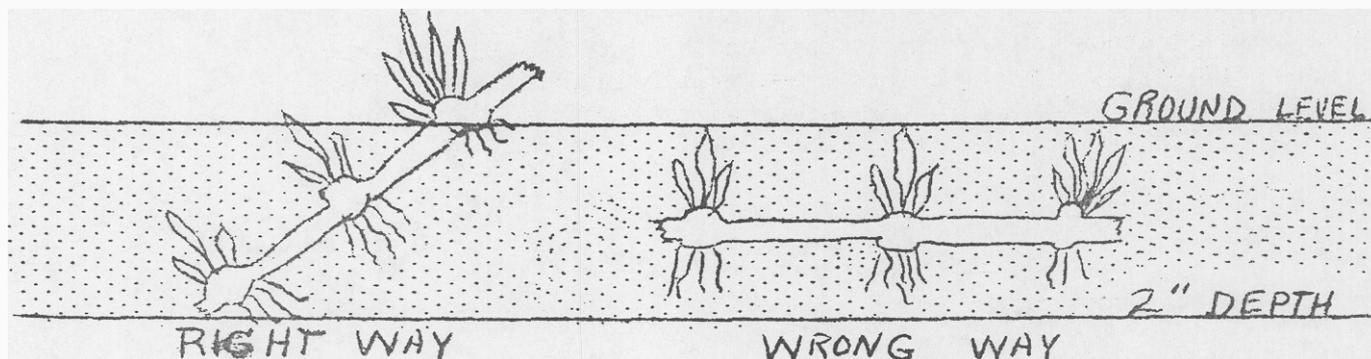
Description

Tufcote is a medium-leaved, medium dark-green Bermudagrass. It has a good rate of spread and its low growth habit forms a dense sod which is *drought* tolerant and salt tolerant. Tufcote has a good degree of winter hardiness and some tolerance to leaf diseases. Tufcote will hold its green color better in the fall than common Bermudagrass and *many* of the other Southern Bermudagrasses. It, of course, will turn straw color during the winter months. Tufcote will produce seed heads but no viable seed has been noted in the Beltsville area. Thus, it is necessary to propagate it vegetatively.

Establishment

Tufcote Bermudagrass is established through the planting of sprigs of the turf rather than the seed. The only sure way of obtaining Tufcote in the pure form is to purchase Certified sprigs or planting stock.

Sprigs can be planted from early spring while it is yet dormant until late summer. Sprigs should be fresh and not *dry* or wilted. Planting sprigs should be 3 to 4 inches long with at least one node or joint with leaves. Plant the **sprigs** in rows 6 to 12 inches apart. The closer the rows the quicker the coverage. Spacing in the row should be from 6 to 12 inches also. When planting sprigs, one end of the sprig should be about 2 inches below the ground with one to two inches above the ground. A node or joint with some leaves should be above the ground.



The **sprigs** can be planted by hand, using a tool to open a slot and placing the sprig to the desired depth or by use of a transplanter or sprigger. In either case be sure to firm the soil around the **sprig** either with your heel or by a presser wheel or tractor wheel.

It is desirable to keep a new planting moist until active growth of the sprigs is observed.

Liming and Fertilization

A soil test should be made to determine the fertility needs. The pH of the soil should be 6 to 6.5 for the best growth and the most efficient use of the fertilizer that is applied.

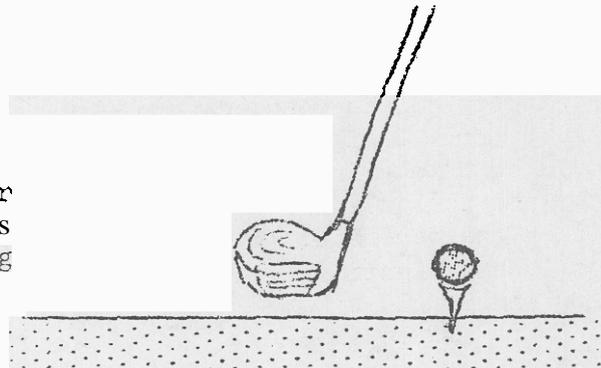
An application of a complete fertilizer should be made before establishing the Tufcote and annually in the fall. Several applications of nitrogen, especially an organic nitrogen during the spring and summer will hasten the spread and benefit the color.

Management

Tufcote Bermudagrass is a low-growing, sod-forming grass, yet for best appearance it should be mowed weekly during the growing season at a height of 1/2 to 1 inch.

Uses

Tufcote will find its best use on fairways, play and athletic fields, utility lawns, beach plantings, lawns for summer homes by the beach, waterways, roadbanks and other critical areas where trampling takes place,

Sources of Material

Breeders Stock will be maintained at the National Plant Materials Center, S.C.S. Beltsville, Maryland. It is not available for general distribution. Foundation Stock will be maintained by the University of Maryland for use of certified growers,

Certified sprigs or stock is available from the Certified Grass Growers Cooperative at Secretary, Maryland.

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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Extension Service, University of Maryland and U. S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating.

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