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## Creeping Bentgrass

The main turf grasses for our area are Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, creeping fescue, turf type tall fescue and the bentgrasses. All our best suited for the home lawn with the exception of the bentgrasses. These are high maintenance grasses best suited for the golf course where they can be mowed short for greens, tees and fairways.

Creeping bentgrass:

Prefers frequent mowing with a reel mowers at 1/8" to 1/2 " height of cut.

**It is very prone to mower scalping with rotary mowers at normal mowing heights of 2" to 3".**

Produces a great deal of thatch and does not mix well with other grasses, often dominating.

Has a shallow root system and subsequent high potential for drought damage.

Thrives in moist areas.

Prone to many turf diseases: brown patch, dollar spot & **especially snow mold.**

Prone to numerous insects, especially crane fly's and chinch bugs.

Our main problem lies in the fact that bentgrass vigorously produces stolons that creep on the surface of the soil giving it a competitive edge. In the home lawn with higher heights of cut, bentgrass grows rapidly and forms large light green patches that visually stand out, especially in the morning with a dew present. The green leaf tissue is located at the ends of the stolons. Rotary mowers tend to lift the grass and cut off the green tissue and leave the brown stalks behind. This gives the lawn a distinct brown appearance. **This is mower scalping.** Environmental conditions that favor bentgrass, left unchanged, will cause a general take over in time over the less aggressive bluegrass and ryes. Too much fertilizer, improper timing and general over-watering will contribute to the spread of the bentgrass. Bentgrass can be introduced as a contaminant in poor quality seed mixes, and is present in the soil, since it is a native grass. It can also come as a contaminate in bluegrass sod as a plant or stolon.

The best management practices would be periodic dethatching, vertical grooming and aeration to keep the stolons short and under control. This is best accomplished in the spring or fall. The use of fungicides may be needed to prevent and suppress fungal activity, especially snow mold.

The most effective way of eliminating the bentgrass is with roundup to kill the entire area and then re-seed. This is best done in August with a seeding a week or two later. A new herbicide, Tenacity, will selectively kill bentgrass without harming the Ky. Bluegrass. It does take three applications of the herbicide to be effective. Late July/early August would be the time to start. Seeding would be two weeks after the first application. See the separate fact sheet on bentgrass removal with Tenacity.