



# Interseeding Alfalfa in Bermudagrass

**: Grow Your Own N Fertilizer**

**: Increase The Value Of Your Hay**

**: Management Simplification**

## Why Interseed Alfalfa into Bermudagrass?

1. Grow your own nitrogen
2. Increase the quality of your forage (+ 30 or more RFQ points)
3. Makes excellent supplemental feed and/or cash hay crop
4. Growing with bermudagrass allows alfalfa to dry faster and be harvested clean
5. If all else fails, you still have bermudagrass.

## Keys to Successfully Establishing Alfalfa into Bermudagrass

1. Select a well-drained site for planting.
2. Soil test the site and lime and fertilize according to the recommendations.
  - a. Ideal levels are: pH 6.5, High P, and High K. pH at 1 ft depth should be greater than 5.5.
  - b. Pay attention to micronutrient fertilization needs (B and Mo, as needed)
3. Plant at the right time of the year:
  - a. Mountains and Piedmont area, Sept.15th - Oct. 15th.
  - b. Coastal Plains region Oct.15th- Nov.15th.
4. Have bermudagrass very short (1-2 in.) whenever planting.
  - a. Spray with a non-selective herbicide:
    - i. paraquat (Gramoxone) at 1 qt./ac or
    - ii. glyphosate (Roundup) at 9 oz./ac if 5.5 lb. a.i. formulation or at 12 oz./ac if 4 lb. a.i. formulation.
  - b. It is ok to burn off with fire after the chemical burn down.
5. Plant with a no-till drill
  - a. Seeding rate = 22-25 lbs/ac
  - b. 7-9 in. rows
  - c. Plant no deeper than ½ in.
6. After emergence, spray with insecticide to control mole crickets and other insect pests (Mustang or Karate at the highest labeled rate).
7. Irrigate if available and necessary.

## Keys to Maintaining Alfalfa in Bermudagrass

1. Applying K fertility as recommended
2. Following K fertility recommendations
3. Fertilize with K as recommended
4. Apply B and Mo as recommended
5. Take a tissue sample 1 wk prior to the second cutting of each year to determine other fertility needs
6. Scout and spray for alfalfa weevils in Feb./Mar. and fall armyworms in summer.

## More Information:

For more information about growing alfalfa in Georgia, see the following publications and websites:

1. Alfalfa Management in Georgia ([http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk\\_id=7788](http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=7788))
2. Growing Alfalfa in the South (<http://www.alfalfa.org/pdf/alfalfainthesouth.pdf>)
3. The Georgia Forages Website ([www.georgiaforages.com](http://www.georgiaforages.com))