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Using tall fescue with seeded zoysiagrass enhances winter color

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Dr. Mingying Xiang using a light box to take digital images and determine green color of a zoysiagrass–tall fescue polystand.

Zoysiagrass is a low-input turfgrass and is well adapted to the transition zone, but some end-users find it undesirable due to its extended period of dormancy. Introducing a cool-season turfgrass like tall fescue into zoysiagrass is an option to improve its winter color; however, information is lacking on how to best establish a zoysiagrass–tall fescue mixed sward in the transition zone.

In a recently published article in *Crop, Forage, & Turfgrass Management*, researchers report on a three-year study from two locations in Kansas where establishment of polystand mixtures of seeded zoysiagrass and tall fescue were investigated to evaluate effects of tall fescue seeding rate, seeding strategy, and mowing height.

Experiment results demonstrated that a polystand mixture of a seeded zoysiagrass and tall fescue was most successfully established by seeding tall fescue at a rate of 8 lb pure live seed/1,000 ft^2 in September into established zoysiagrass mowed at 0.75 inches. The mixture can be sustained at a level that enhances spring and fall color during zoysiagrass dormancy over a period of at least three years.

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Xiang, M., Fry, J., & Kennelly, M. (2020). Establishment and persistence of zoysiagrass–tall fescue mixtures. *Crop, Forage & Turfgrass Management, 6*. **https://doi.org/10.1002/cft2.20011**

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