



Description

Bella® Bluegrass is an outstanding Kentucky bluegrass cultivar that is drought resistant and tolerant of high temperatures. Its drought resistance characteristics make it suited for use where water conservation is an issue. Bella's heat tolerance makes it suitable for use in the transition zone. Bella is low-growing and requires infrequent mowing, making it an excellent choice for lawns which can benefit from a reduced mowing schedule and for sites that are difficult to mow, such as slopes and banks. Bella requires low fertilizer input and grows well on soils ranging from sand to heavy clay. Bella can only be established vegetatively by sprigs, rhizomes, plugs or sod. It also has an excellent shade tolerance compared to other bluegrasses. Its dark green color and low growth habit give it a highly appealing turfgrass quality and appearance.

Production and Quality Control

Genetic purity and preservation of the Bella Bluegrass variety is of the utmost importance. Only licensed turfgrass producers are authorized to grow Bella for sale. All licensed Bella production is monitored through on-going quality control and quality assurance programs.

Best Management Practices

Installation and Establishment

Installation and the care taken during the initial days that follow are the most critical factors in determining the long-term quality and performance of Bella Bluegrass. Harvesting and transplantation is extremely stressful to any turfgrass and precautionary measures should be taken to help reduce further cultural and environmental stresses.

Proper care, including pre-installation soil preparation and limiting time on the pallet to less than 24 hours, yields positive results. Improper care, however, can cause death of the turfgrass or damage that results in lengthy recovery and additional expense.

Irrigating Newly Installed Bella:

Proper watering upon installation is essential to successful establishment:

- Prior to installation, ensure irrigation systems are working properly and covering all areas to be planted
- Water thoroughly upon installation ensuring that both the Bella is wet and the soil is moist to a depth of 3"
- Water immediately following installation of Bella Bluegrass
- To promote root establishment, water ½" every day for the first 2-3 weeks
- Shaded areas and heavy soils require less water than full-sun areas and sandy soils
- When proper rooting is evident, alter irrigation program accordingly (see Post Establishment Irrigation on page 2)

Mowing: New installations are often uneven and care should be taken not to scalp high spots:

- Mow within 10 days of installation and bag clippings the first few mowings
- See Post Establishment Mowing on page 2 for more information

Fertility: Use a transplant-friendly regimen that will help reduce shock and minimize disease:

- Use a starter fertilizer that is low in Nitrogen and higher in Phosphorous and Potassium

Post Establishment

Mowing: Mowing is a critical and often under appreciated cultural practice:

- Maintain Bella at 2-3" (2" is optimal)
- Heights above 3" will reduce quality
- Rotary mowers are preferred for heights 1" or higher
- For sports applications you can use a reel mowers for heights below 1"
- Mow every 7-10 days during the spring. Mow every 14-21 days, or as needed, during the rest of the year.
- Never cut more than 1/3 of the total length of the blade at any one mowing
- If a scheduled mowing is missed and clippings clump on top of the Bella, bag or vacuum clippings to reduce shade-out
- Vertical mowing (verticutting) may be performed to renovate Bella



Insecticides: Avoid stress from insects by performing insecticidal applications as needed:

- **For any insecticide application, always read and follow label directions carefully**
- Early identification and treatment of insect stress minimizes inputs and injury
- Make routine observations of the landscape being aware of seasonal pests can reduce quality if critical populations are reached
- Monitor with special care for billbugs and use Merit(larvae/grubs) & Pyrethroid (Adult) if necessary. Make a spring and fall application of Merit. If infestation is high, use a Pyrethroid in the summer to break the cycle.
- Consult with local experts for insecticide recommendations

Herbicides: Proper mowing, irrigation and fertilization of Bella will reduce weed problems. If a weed problem persists:

- **For any herbicide application, always read and follow label directions carefully**
- **Improper use of herbicides can severely damage or kill Bella**
- Make routine observations of the landscape being aware of seasonal weeds
- Identify the type of weed causing the problem before using any chemicals controls
- Use a pre-emergent in spring and a broadleaf post-emergent if necessary
- Consult with local experts for herbicide recommendations

Fungicides: Bella has shown resistance to most fungal problems and controls should be used only as needed:

- **For any fungicide application, always read and follow label directions carefully**
- Early identification and treatment of disease stress minimizes inputs and injury
- Make routine observations of the landscape being aware of unusual symptoms
- Consider a broad-spectrum fungicide application if predictable seasonal problems are noted
- If conditions are right for rust, make 2-3 applications of a broad-spectrum fungicide 14-21 days apart
- Consult with local experts for fungicide recommendations

Irrigation: Established Bella performs better than other varieties under drought stress due to improved plant genetics and growth characteristics:

- Watering requirements are greatly dependent on soil type, season, geography and other factors
- Ensure irrigation systems are working properly and covering all areas covered by Bella
- Make routine observations of the landscape and learn the signs (i.e. wilting) that indicate when irrigation is required
- Shaded areas and heavy soils require less water than full-sun areas and sandy soils
- Encourage deep root growth by watering until the soil is moist to a depth of 6 to 12", shallow watering encourages shallow roots
- As a general rule, Bella should receive $\frac{3}{4}$ -1" of water one time per week by irrigation or rainfall
- Infrequent deep watering maximizes drought resistance and tolerance

Fertility: Proper fertility practices will encourage healthy, disease and insect free Bella:

- Perform soil tests to understand your soil type(s) and condition and best determine your specific fertility needs
- Make routine observations and fertilize according to what the landscape tells you
- Understand what and how much fertilizer you are applying
- Avoid disease and insect inducing growth flushes by reducing Nitrogen rates
- Improve color and limit growth surges by utilizing iron sources
- Higher Nitrogen rates should only be applied in the spring and fall
- If located in an area where Bella goes dormant during the winter, the recommended fertility rate for Bella is 1lb of Nitrogen applied every 60 days during your growing season. Apply the first application 30 days after the lawn greens up in the spring. Use a 25-5-5 or similar fertilizer
- 30 days before Bella goes dormant, in the late fall or early winter, fertilize with a winterizer fertilizer, such as a 20-10-10 or similar
- If located in an area where Bella does not go dormant, fertilize every 60 days with 1lb of Nitrogen per 1000 square feet using a 25-5-5 or similar fertilizer
- If necessary use lower rates of Nitrogen in the summer

