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Also, remember it is one thing to germinate the overseeded grass; it is a whole other process to get it to establish enough to actually tolerate traffic and persist. You can always add a bit more seed to touch up worn/thin areas but you can never go back and regain the warmer days and longer period of sunlight that might be lost due to a late start. Some managers have used germination blankets and field covers to help later in the season but those are not ideal solutions compared to the natural growing conditions Mother Nature provides in September and early October.

Lastly, if you plan for only one seeding date, then it is advisable to make sure you seed in two directions, seeding the borders with a drop spreader (if you want a nice crisp edge) and the interior can be planted with a drop or broadcast spreader.

**TO CULTIVATE OR NOT?**

This is a highly debatable question when it comes to overseeding preparations. The research in this area is inconclusive but almost never negative in terms of overseeding success or bermudagrass survival. Remem-

ber, seed soil contact is a critical factor for success. Where excess thatch is not an issue, many turf managers have had good success with broadcasting seed and then following with moderate sand topdressing and dragging the seed/sand into the canopy with a drag implement (flexible drag, brush, etc.). Otherwise, a cultivation/coring about 2-3 weeks before the intended initial overseeding event is advisable.

**GOING BACK TO BERMUDA?**

Managers of bermudagrass fields work hard to get back to nearly 100% bermudagrass, at least for part of the summer. This will help ensure a good bermudagrass base and better overall long-term field performance. Thus, a grass species that transitions easily or the use of chemical transitioning herbicides is recommended. This topic, however, is a whole article in itself. ■

*Cale Bigelow, PhD, is an associate professor of agronomy for the Purdue University Turf Science program.*



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