

BAHIAGRASS

Background

Bahiagrass is very drought tolerant and can be planted throughout the state. Seeded bahiagrass should be planted between March and May at a seeding rate of 20 pounds per acre. Nitrogen and potassium fertilization are essential for high yields, especially for hay production. Ammonium nitrate (34-0-0) has been the fertilizer of choice for bahiagrass during summer months, but its availability has become limited due to regulations by the Department of Homeland Security. Urea-ammonium sulfate is the N fertilizer available to Mississippi's livestock producers for hay and pasture. The new 33-0-0 is a blend of urea and ammonium sulfate that should be just as effective as ammonium nitrate in most situations. These yield results can differ from location to location in the state. To maintain a balance between yields and forage quality in a hay production system, it is recommended to cut hay in 30- to 35-day intervals.

Protocol

The experimental design was a randomized complete block with four replications. Plots were 6 feet × 10 feet in size with 5-foot alleys between plots and 10-foot alleys between blocks. The study was planted on May 29, 2013, and given a year to establish in Poplarville. The initial fertilizer application was 335 pounds of 15-5-10 at planting. Nitrogen was applied after each harvest at a rate of 50 pounds of N per acre using urea-ammonium sulfate (33-0-0S). Plots were harvested when more than 50% of the plots reached a forage height of 12–15 inches or every 4–5 weeks, depending on environmental conditions. Plots were harvested with a “Zero Turn” mower to a 3-inch stubble height and the center 52-inch swath. Yields were recorded, and subsamples were collected for dry matter analysis. Data were analyzed using the General Linear Model (PROC GLM) of SAS, and mean separation was conducted using the LSD at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 2. Seeded bahiagrass dry matter yields at Poplarville, 2016.¹

Variety	Harvest date					Total
	5/5/16	5/27/16	6/29/16	8/2/16	9/30/16	
	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>
Argentine	6216	2026	2170	3445	7793	21649
Pensacola	4688	1993	1822	3519	5404	17426
TifQuik	5686	1520	1527	3811	6633	19176
Tifton9	4959	1741	2037	3663	7379	19780
UASandMt	6077	1852	1954	3272	6663	19817
UFRiata	5502	2268	2405	3679	7186	21040
Mean	5521	1900	1986	3565	6843	19815
LSD _{0.05}	NS	NS	NS	NS	1066	NS
CV%	27	23	25	13	10	14

¹NS = Not Significant
Planted: May 29, 2013
Fertilizer: 335 lb/A of 15-5-10 at planting; 50 lb/A of N using (33-0-0S) after each harvest

Table 3. Seeded bahiagrass 4-year totals and average dry matter yields at Poplarville, 2013–16.¹

Variety	Harvest date				4-year avg.
	2013	2014	2015	2016	
	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>	<i>lb/A</i>
Argentine	2370	19324	18678	21649	13951
Pensacola	2403	15861	16238	17426	11810
TifQuik	2305	18089	16070	19176	12489
Tifton9	2442	15632	16837	19780	12433
UASandMt	2199	16963	15901	19817	12200
UFRiata	1494	17432	16169	21040	12658
Mean	2202	17217	16649	19815	12590
LSD _{0.05}	NS	2021	NS	NS	NS
CV%	20	7	11	14	7

¹NS = Not Significant
Planted: May 29, 2013
Fertilizer: 335 lb/A of 15-5-10 at planting; 50 lb/A of N using (33-0-0S) after each harvest