

SEED RESEARCH REPORTS

Velvet Bentgrass

SR 7200 velvet bentgrass is the first velvet seed in 30 years released by Seed Research to meet the unique environmental needs of golf course professionals and golfers. The result of a long term improvement program by Dr. Richard Skogley of the University of Rhode Island, in cooperation with Seed Research, SR 7200 velvet bentgrass combines the low maintenance aspects of older velvets with a dark green color and good seed yields. Velvet bentgrass is the finest-textured, densest bentgrass.

PREMIUM PUTTING QUALITY

Velvet bentgrasses have long been recognized as forming the best putting surface. Much of the mystique and putting quality of many older golf courses into the 1960's was due to the predominance of velvet bentgrass in their putting greens, from the "South German" bentgrass they had been seeded with. Under conditions of acid soils and low fertility velvet bentgrasses were usually the primary bent present. With the increased usage of water and fertilizers, the velvet bentgrasses developed softer, weaker growth and began to suffer. Due to excessive management a low maintenance bentgrass developed a reputation as requiring high levels of management. SR 7200 allows a return to the highest quality putting surface.

LOW MAINTENANCE

SR 7200 has a darker color than 'Kingstown' velvet bentgrass. It retains this color even with the low fertility that is best for velvets. Velvets do best with only 2-4 lbs. of nitrogen per year so they are ideal for sensitive sites. Since velvets do well on acid soils, use of ammonium sulfate as the fertilizer source is a natural method of *Poa annua* control without herbicides. Properly grown velvet bentgrass is very disease resistant. SR 7200 is very low growing and can be mown as low as 3/32 inch. It can also be used for home lawns. In 1940 Sprague wrote that velvet bentgrass has the widest range of usefulness of any bent species. SR 7200 has also performed well in fairway trials at Rutgers University in New Jersey. It showed high levels of resistance to brown patch, copper spot, and dollar spot.

LOW WATER USE

Velvet bentgrass is very drought tolerant and SR 7200 has been selected to preserve this characteristic. Overwatering encourages *Poa annua* and lush growth that is less wear tolerant, so it should be avoided.

SHADE TOLERANT

Velvet bentgrasses are the most shade tolerant of the bentgrasses. It is often difficult to grow other bentgrasses in these sites so SR 7200 is highly recommended for shaded greens.

AERIFICATION AND TOPDRESSING

Due to the density of velvet late summer to fall aerification is recommended to avoid excessive thatch. Topdressing should be applied at this time and after monthly verticutting.

- Dark green color
- Velvet putting surface
- Dense, fine-textured
- Good seed yields
- Low fertility
- Shade tolerant

PVP

IMPROVEMENT THRU RESEARCH