

2014 Recommended Kentucky Bluegrass Cultivars for North Carolina

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A great number of Kentucky bluegrass cultivars have been tested in North Carolina which provide excellent performance (p. 9, Carolina Lawns, 2008). Many of these cultivars are still being sold in grass seed products and would be expected to perform very well in the NC climate when properly established and maintained.

Recommended lists before 2012, only included cultivars that performed among the top performing cultivars in the last trial. Beginning in 2013 recommended cultivar lists changed to include not only the most recent trial but also trial data going back to 2002---since many of the older cultivars are still available and would still be good performers in NC. They also included some data from eight other transition zone states to give a better representation of performance across the transition zone. So, a much larger dataset was used and then the two lists were combined to form one grand list (Table 1). While this makes for a long list, hopefully it will make it easier for users to find good-performing Kentucky bluegrass cultivar for central and western parts of the state.

As stated last year, cultivars in our tests have been susceptible to summer patch when grown in Raleigh, NC. Using appropriate management practices remains the primary means of reducing injury from this disease.

Companies often blend multiple cultivars together for sale in the retail market but use a simple Name Brand to enhance brand recognition. The combination of grasses is often recommended since there is no one grass that will perform well under all conditions. So when shopping for seed, the name on the front of the bag may not represent or identify the cultivars that make up the product. To add to the confusion, the cultivars and/or the percentage of each cultivar within the bag of a Name Brand may change from year to year but the Name Brand often remains unchanged. Again, this is done for brand recognition. Under close inspection, however, the bags are required to list the cultivar(s) and the percentage of each cultivar by weight within the bag. Customers often ask about matching our recommended cultivars to those listed on the bag seed label. Unfortunately, it may not be easy to find a bag that contains only cultivars from our recommended lists. It is suggested, however, that at least 50% of the contents consist of NCSU's recommended cultivars. The higher the percentage, the greater the chances of having a successful turf.

Table 1: The following Kentucky bluegrass cultivar performed well in long-term tests conducted between 2001 and 2010, plus some shorter duration tests through 2013. Not all of these cultivars will be available in 2014.

4-Season	Arrowhead	Baroness	Blackstone
Alexa II *†	Aura *	Barrister *	Blue Note **
America	Avid	Barvette HGT **§	Blue Velvet
Apollo	Award *†**	Bedazzled	Blueberry
Arcadia	Awesome	Belissimo	Bluestone
Aries	Bandera	Bewitched *	Boomerang
Armada	Barduke	Beyond *†	Brilliant
Arrow	Barnique	Blacksburg II	Cabernet**

Champagne	Futurity	Moon Shadow	Rugby II
Champlain	Gaelic	Moonlight SLT	Shiraz †
Chicago II	Ginnney II *	Mystere	Showcase
Corsair	Gladstone	Nu Destiny *†	Skye ***
Courtyard	Granite *	NuChicago *†**	Solar Eclipse *†
Delight	Hampton	NuGlade *†	Sonoma
Diva	Harmonie	Odyssey	Sorbonne
Dynamo	Impact *†	Perfection	Starburst
Eagleton	Jefferson	Pinot	Sudden Impact *
Emblem	Juliet	Princeton 105	Total Eclipse
Empire †**§	Jump Start	Prosperity	Touche
Envicta	Keeneland	Quantum Leap	Tsunami
Everest *	Langara	Rambo	Unique
Everglade *	Liberator	Rhapsody *†	Valor
Excursion *	Madison	Rhythm *†	Voyager II
Freedom II	Mercury	Rita	Washington
Freedom III	Midnight *†**	Royce	Zinfandel *
Front Page	Midnight II	Rubicon	

*top performing cultivar in region from last 5-year study.

†best of the best in Raleigh location from last 5-year study.

**best performing in Raleigh location in *last year* of a new 5-year study.

§excellent summer patch tolerance in 2013