

Bahiagrass Establishment: The How-To & Costs

Pasture Management School
Central Florida Livestock Agents Group
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Where to Start & Why

- **Prepared Seedbed**
 - Eliminate competition from weeds
 - pH needs to be 5.5 for Bahiagrass
- **A clean, firm seedbed allows for a better chance of seed germination.**

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Prepared Seedbed: Clearing

Clear weeds, stumps, and brush

- 64 oz/acre (.5 gal) of glyphosate for native species & general weeds
- 128 oz/acre (1 gal) of glyphosate for Bahiagrass & common Bermuda

Equipment

- 40 to 100-gallon electric sprayer w/ 3-6 ft. boom
 - Mounted to ATV, UTV, or pulled behind tractor
- Repeated disking/tilling
 - Could be a cheaper option, but **must** make sure the seedbed is packed firm before planting

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Prepared Seedbed: Planning

Soil Test

- pH 5.5
- Lime if needed & apply 3-6 months before planting
- Fertilize if needed based on soil test results
 - Only P and K; N may encourage other grass/weed growth

Planting Dates

- March – August
 - Will vary based on location & weather
- Rainy season (June – August)
- With irrigation
 - as early as March

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Planting

Seed

- Cultivars → select one that fits your needs & location
- Ideal Seed → 80% germination, no noxious weeds
- Order/Buy close to planting to avoid risks involved with storage
- Rate: 20-30 lbs/acre
 - May increase if broadcasting

Equipment

- **Soil must be packed before planting to ensure accurate seed depth for germination**
- Cultipacker-style planter (drop seeder)
- Grain drill (small seed-box attachment)
- Broadcast
- Depth – ¼ - ½ inch deep

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After Planting: Fertilizer

- Bahiagrass needs root establishment before fertilizing, unlike some annual grasses that can be fertilized at planting or right after emergence
- **7-10 days after emergence** → 30 lbs of N/acre, all recommended P, & 50% of recommended K
- **40-50 days later** → 50 lbs of N/acre & remaining K
- **After establishment** → follow soil test results

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After Planting: Weed Control

• **Herbicides**

- 2,4-D, Dicamba, Glyphosate, GrazonNext, Sulfosulfon
- Depends on what you are treating for & season (dormant v. nondormant)
- **DO NOT** use herbicides on Bahiagrass until at least 6 in tall

Helpful Resources

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/AG342> - Bahiagrass (Paspalum Notatum Flugge): Overview and Pasture Management
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ag107> - Forage Planting and Establishment Methods on Prepared Seedbed
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/wg006> - Weed Management in Pastures and Rangeland-2023

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How Much is This Going to Cost?

Operating Costs (Variable)

- Preparation
- Planting
- Fertilizer & Weed Control
- Labor & Interest



FOR THIS PRESENTATION

Ownership Costs (Fixed)

- Equipment (depreciation, interest, taxes)
- Land
- Overhead (any other recurring expenses that are not directly involved in production)

❖ Fixed Costs are very specific to each operation

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Costs Per Acre: Preparation

	Unit	Quantity	\$/Unit		Total/Acre
Disking <small>(fuel costs)</small>	passes	2	\$	3.02	\$ 6.04
Herbicide <small>(glyphosate)</small>	gallons	0.5	\$	22.00	\$ 11.00
Soil Test	test	1	\$	10.00	\$ 10.00
Lime <small>(1 ton/acre)</small>	ton	1	\$	52.00	\$ 52.00
TOTAL					\$ 79.04

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Costs Per Acre: Planting

	Unit	Quantity	\$/Unit		Total/Acre
Seed	pounds	25	\$	6.00	\$ 150.00
Cultipacking <small>(fuel costs)</small>	passes	2	\$	2.70	\$ 5.40
Planter <small>(fuel costs)</small>	passes	1	\$	1.62	\$ 1.62
TOTAL					\$ 157.02

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Costs Per Acre: Fertilizer & Weed Control

<i>7-10 days after emergence</i>	Unit	Quantity	\$/Unit	Total/Acre
Nitrogen (N)	pounds	30	\$ 0.62	\$ 18.60
Phosphorus (p2o5)	pounds	40	\$ 0.84	\$ 33.60
Potassium (K2O)	pounds	30	\$ 0.42	\$ 12.60
<i>40-50 days after emergence</i>				
Nitrogen (N)	pounds	50	\$ 0.62	\$ 31.00
Potassium (K2O)	pounds	30	\$ 0.42	\$ 12.60
<i>After 6 in of growth</i>				
Herbicide (2,4-D)	gallons	0.25	\$ 18.00	\$ 4.50
TOTAL				\$ 112.90

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Costs Per Acre: Labor, Fuel, & Interest

	Unit	Quantity	\$/Unit	Total/Acre
Labor	hours	2	\$ 13.00	\$ 26.00
Fuel (spraying x2 & fertilizing/timing x3)	gallons	2.06	\$ 4.00	\$ 8.23
Interest	dollars	\$383.20	5.13%	\$ 19.64
TOTAL				\$ 53.87

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Costs Per Acre: TOTAL

	Total/Acre
Preparation	\$ 79.04
Planting	\$ 157.02
Fertilizer & Weed Control	\$ 112.90
Labor, Fuel, & Interest	\$ 53.87
TOTAL (operating costs/acre)	\$ 402.83

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QUESTIONS???

MAY GOD BLESS YOUR STEWARDSHIP!!!

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