REGISTRATION OF CROP CULTIVARS

REGISTRATION OF ‘NUMEX SAHARA’ BERMUDAGRASS

‘NumEx Sahara’ bermudagrass, *Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers., (Reg. no. 18, PI 531090) was developed by the New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station. It was tested under the experimental designation NM S-1 and released in February 1987.

NumEx Sahara, a seed-propagated cultivar, was developed for shorter internode length, greater turf density and increased green summer color. Parent clones were selected for high seed production and turf quality.

NumEx Sahara is a medium-textured turfgrass cultivar similar to ‘Common’. However, stem internode length, leaf length and plant height were found to be 19, 31, and 45% less, respectively, when compared to Common at Las Cruces, NM. NumEx Sahara has received higher turfgrass quality ratings than the other two seed-propagated bermudagrass cultivars, Common and ‘Guymon’, evaluated in the National Bermudagrass Test. NumEx Sahara has been tested and is intended for use as a general purpose turfgrass for the southern part of the USA.

Parentage of NumEx Sahara consists of eight clones selected on the basis of polycross progeny performance. These eight clones were intercrossed and subjected to two cycles of recurrent phenotypic selection. Breeder seed was produced by intercrossing 220 of the most desirable plants. Seed increase of NumEx Sahara is on a three-generation basis: breeder, foundation and certified. Seed will be primarily produced in Arizona and California. The multiplication and distribution of all classes of seed will be handled by Farmers Marketing Corporation, P.O. Box 60578, Phoenix, AZ 85082-0578. U.S. Plant Variety Protection Certificate no. 8800010 has been granted on NumEx Sahara.

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References and Notes

1. Dep. of Agronomy and Horticulture, New Mexico State Univ., Las Cruces, NM 88003-0003. NumEx Sahara was developed with partial financial support from the U.S. Golf Assoc. and the GolfCourse Superintendents Assoc. of Am. through the USGA Turfgrass Res. Committee. Journal article no. 1436. Registration by CSSA. Accepted 28 Feb. 1989.

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Tifton 9 is the ninth cycle of recurrent pheno- typic selection (RRPS) (2). RRPS that resulted in 1960 when the breeding project was improved to permit one cycle per year with in yield per cycle. Each cycle screens the seedlings from a population of about 20,000 in the greenhouse and the best 200 plants in the field. Field selection of the best five plant block is made visually. The largest leaves and good seed head abundance are selected. Three culms from each plant ready to mature on these culms, 125 per selection, are placed in gallon jars of water and are under a 1 m diameter paper tent where they are thoroughly intermated each morning as they shed pollen. Seeds that intermated on these culms, 125 per selection, are grown in flats of steam-sterilized soil in the greenhouse to start the next cycle of RRPS.

Many improved forage cultivars are vigorous in the seedling stage, is more succulent (palatable), is equally digestible, and in replicated grazing trials yielded 47% more forage over a 3-yr period. Tifton 9 also produced more seed. In clipping and grazing trials conducted at Tifton, GA, Pensacola bahiagrass is frost- and cold-tolerant and has produced more beef than Argentine and Paraguay cultivars.

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