Registration of ‘FloraTeX®’ Bermudagrass

‘FloraTeX®’ bermudagrass [Cynodon dactylon (L.) Pers.] (Reg. no. CV-27, PI 586639) was released jointly by the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station in 1992 and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (TAES) in 1993 (5,17). It is a vegetatively propagated, low-maintenance turfgrass for cemeteries, golf course fairways and roughs, lawns, parks, and sports turfs in warm-humid and warm-semiarid climatic regions of the USA. FloraTeX® bermudagrass was tested under the experimental designation FB-119.

The original source of FloraTeX® bermudagrass is thought to have been introduced into United States under the name ‘Franklin’ on 18 Feb. 1954 by African Explosives and Chemical Industries, Ltd., Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa (7). It was designated PI 213385 by USDA New Crops Research Branch, Crops Research Division.

The source of FB-119 bermudagrass in Florida is unknown, although it was identified as PI 213385 (Franklin) in Univ. of Florida records. Unfortunately, original stock of PI 213385 has been lost at the Southern Regional Plant Introduction Center so that comparisons with original germplasm are not possible (G.R. Lovell, personal communication).

From 1955 to 1962, PI 213385 was tested in Alabama, Arizona, California, and Georgia (7). PI 213385 was reported to be resistant to bermudagrass stunt mite (Eriophyes cynodoniensis Sayed) (1,4).

During the 1970s and 1980s, many studies on FB-119 bermudagrass, a vegetatively propagated selection, were conducted at the Univ. of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) at Fort Lauderdale and Gainesville and at Texas A&M University at College Station, TX (5). From 1986 to 1990, FB-119 was evaluated in a southern regional cooperative test administered by the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP), USDA-ARS, Beltsville, MD. This NTEP study involved 28 bermudagrass entries and was conducted at 22 locations in 14 states throughout the southern USA (8).

FloraTeX® bermudagrass is a fertile, cross-pollinated, tetraploid perennial having a chromosome complement of 2n=4x=36 (J.C. Read, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Dallas, TX, personal communication). It is a prolific seed head producer in May and June (5,7,8,14) and may produce viable seeds (5). Thus, it is imperative that seed heads be controlled in established turfs by timely fertilization and mowing to prevent seed contamination and possible loss of genetic purity.

FloraTeX® bermudagrass is a deep rooted (2), warm-season turfgrass with excellent dehydration avoidance (13), low N requirement (3,5,6,11), excellent color retention under low temperatures in the fall (6,7,8,12), and early spring greenup (1,6,7,8,12). It is resistant to bermudagrass stunt mite (1,4,10). It is tolerant to shortwinged mole cricket (Scapteriscus abbreviates Scudder) and to lance [Hoplolaimus galeatus (Cobb)] Filipjev & Schuurmans Stekhoven] and spiral [Helicotylenchus pseudorobustus (Steiner)] Golden] nematodes (9,15). Unlike most turf-type bermudagrass cultivars, it is least affected by dollar spot (caused by Sclerotinia homoeocarpa F.T. Bennett) under low N stress (6,8). It is widely adapted and produces an acceptable turf throughout the southern USA (8). It can be identified by means of starch gel electrophoresis for an aconitase fingerprint (16). FloraTeX® bermudagrass is an environmentally acceptable grass for low-maintenance turfs on golf course fairways and roughs, as well as for athletic fields and other recreational sports turfs, roadsides, and home lawns. Like most bermudagrasses, FloraTeX® lacks shade tolerance.

Vegetative foundation stock of FloraTeX® bermudagrass was released to licensed growers only. FloraTeX® bermudagrass is being grown under strict certification standards to maintain its genetic purity. Direct inquiries about availability of foundation stock to Florida Foundation Seed Producers, Inc., P.O. Box 309, Greenwood, FL 32443, or Texas Foundation Seed Service, College Station, TX 77843.

A. E. Dudeck,* J. B. Beard, J. A. Reinert, and S. I. Sifers

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References and Notes

17. FloraTeX® is a registered trademark of the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station.