



A Zoysia Revolution

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Zoysia is not a new grass, but it might be new to many gardeners. So why is zoysia getting a lot of attention lately? Because it's a foot tickler, and it's drought-tolerant too.

Dry Florida conditions have sent turf growers, property managers and homeowners looking for a St. Augustine alternative. They are searching for some good-looking grass that can survive from rainfall to rainfall. All want something that is drought-tolerant, and zoysia might be the answer.

First, zoysia has the look most gardeners like. It is a fine-bladed grass that can be mowed close and create a carpetlike look underfoot like the Empire zoysia lawn pictured on the left. Zoysia has a drought-tolerant reputation, surviving from underground rhizomes that just sort of go dormant during the dry times. It can also be mowed with the rotary mower most gardeners already have at home. There are many zoysia varieties, and due to its increased popularity, more are on the way.



Now, here is something all gardeners have to understand. If zoysia does not get water for a week or more, it begins to turn brown. It will become totally brown if residents are not able to water. But, zoysia survives and revives when the rains return. Just to be fair, bahia and bermuda lawns can do

the same, but these might not have the look gardeners like or they might need more maintenance.

That does not mean a good-looking zoysia lawn is totally carefree. Forget the ads you often see during the spring months. A good-looking zoysia lawn does need water from rainfall or irrigation to remain green. But once a week should keep it growing. Also, it does need several feedings a year. Zoysia does not get chinch bugs, but it does have a pest called the Hunting billbug -- it has not become a major pest yet and is manageable.

Take a look at zoysia if you are interested in a drought-tolerant lawn or new lawn. Get all the information you need by downloading a University of Florida zoysia bulletin at: edis.ifas.ufl.edu/LH011



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