



REGAL STAYGREEN®

TURF TYPE KIKUYU GRASS

Regal StayGreen™ Kikuyu Establishment Guide

Regal StayGreen kikuyu is a turf type kikuyu that has a darker green colour and finer leaf texture than vegetative kikuyu. Regal StayGreen kikuyu is more cold tolerant than other warm season grasses and retains its green colour better. It also withstands heat and drought well and is not susceptible to many of the common turf pests or diseases. It has good tolerance of wear and quickly recovers from injury. Its fine dense habit means it provides an excellent lie for golf course fairways and a tight, dense turf for sportsfields.



Regal StayGreen kikuyu leaf structure.

Adaptation

Regal StayGreen kikuyu is adapted to areas that are frost free or experience occasional frosts. Regal StayGreen kikuyu is a subtropical (warm season) grass that grows best over summer when temperatures are in the range 16-21°C. Regal StayGreen kikuyu has better winter colour retention than most tropical grasses and does not readily discolour with a single frost. It will yellow with multiple frosts but will not tolerate sustained frosting. The minimum temperature for growth is about 8°C, well below that of most tropical grasses, such as Bermudagrass or couch grass *Cynodon dactylon*.

Regal StayGreen kikuyu does best with regular rainfall throughout the year but has excellent tolerance for sustained periods of drought, even on sandy soils. It tolerates moderate soil salinity and salt spray. It has good tolerance to waterlogging.

Regal StayGreen kikuyu can be established on a wide range of soils. While it does best on well structured soils of high fertility, it can thrive on silty soils and sandy soils with moderate fertility. It can establish on very acidic soils (to pH 4.5) and soils with low phosphorous and potassium. Regal StayGreen kikuyu responds to phosphorous and nitrogen at establishment.

Regal StayGreen kikuyu requires minimal nitrogen to maintain a turf cover. In fact, too much nitrogen fertiliser produces too much growth, resulting in a puffy surface.



Full establishment of Regal StayGreen kikuyu on playing grounds at Luther College, Australia.

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Establishment

- Sowing can be carried out from late spring, to late summer. The optimum temperatures for germination are 18-29°C. It can however be sown at lower temperatures in spring, provided kikuyu is still growing and the seed will germinate.
- The preferred sowing rate for Regal StayGreen kikuyu is 5-8 grams per square metre, (50kg–80kg per hectare).
- Kikuyu seed is relatively large (2mm long) dark brown and oval in shape. It should not be planted too deeply. A maximum depth of 5mm is recommended. Kikuyu is best sown in a well prepared seedbed. Rolling after sowing helps retain moisture around the seed. Kikuyu seed should always be sown alone as a companion species will retard establishment.
- It is critical to maintain plenty of moisture around the seed until it germinates and new shoots emerge. Once germinated it rapidly forms a full cover within 8 weeks in optimum conditions. After that kikuyu shouldn't require any more irrigation.
- Regal StayGreen kikuyu can frequently be established without any basal fertiliser or liming on soils with moderate fertility. On infertile sites a balanced NPK application or a starter fertiliser with low nitrogen content can speed up establishment. Its natural vigour is enough for it to establish after germination without excessive nitrogen fertiliser.
- Emergence of the seedlings is easy to identify after about 10–20 days because kikuyu leaves have fine hairs on both sides of the leaf surface. This is unique to kikuyu.

Early Care

- Set the mower at 25mm and begin mowing 3-4 weeks after germination as soon as there is grass to cut.
- Mow frequently, preferably twice per week to begin with, when actively growing.
- Reel mowing using heavy cutting units gives the best appearance, but rotary mowing can be successful.
- Once full cover has been reached the mowing height can be lowered to 12mm on a golf course fairway.



"Luther College is more than pleased with the result of the Regal StayGreen kikuyu as a playing surface. Luther College is a school of 1050 secondary students; the area in which the seed was sown has more than met our expectations, both in terms of appearance and serviceability."

Lindsay Bovill
Business Manager
Luther College, Australia

For more information:

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