

“Ocala” - A New Diploid Annual Ryegrass for the Southern U.S.¹

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Ocala, a new UF annual ryegrass, has excellent disease resistance and sufficient cold tolerance to be grown successfully in the southern annual ryegrass region of the U.S. Ocala was tested experimentally as M/FL X2004 (New4) LRCT. It is a well-adapted, diploid annual ryegrass population that was developed jointly between G.M. Prine at Gainesville and A.R. Blount at the North Florida Research and Education Center, Quincy and Marianna. Parentage includes several advanced experimental annual ryegrass populations for Florida and Nebraska.

Cold Tolerance: Ocala has good cold tolerance and should be adapted over the entire annual ryegrass belt. Mild winters at the North Florida Research and Education Center at Marianna indicated similar cold tolerance to that of Marshall ryegrass.

Disease Ratings: Ocala has excellent crown rust resistance and some resistance to gray leaf spot and *Helminthosporium* leaf spot diseases.

Dry Matter Yields: Ocala yielded above average in 16 of 27 Southeastern ryegrass trials and was among the top 5 highest yielding entries of 5 trials. In 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 trials, Ocala yielded above-average dry matter yields at locations in Florida, Louisiana, Virginia, Mississippi, and Texas.

This new variety is widely adapted over the Southeastern ryegrass belt. Results from Georgia and Florida regional



trials can be found at <http://www.swvt.uga.edu/2011/sm11/AP100-3-RyegrassF.pdf>.

This diploid ryegrass has good cold tolerance for mild winters in the southern Coastal Plains of the U.S. and areas of similar climate. Ocala also has excellent resistance to crown rust, improved resistance to stem rust, and good resistance to gray leaf spot and *Helminthosporium* leaf spot disease. Marketing and distribution of seed are through American Grass Seed Producers, Tangent, OR (by phone: 541- 926-4611 or on the web: <http://agsp.us/>).

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