

'Tropic Shore' seashore paspalum

Management

and

uses

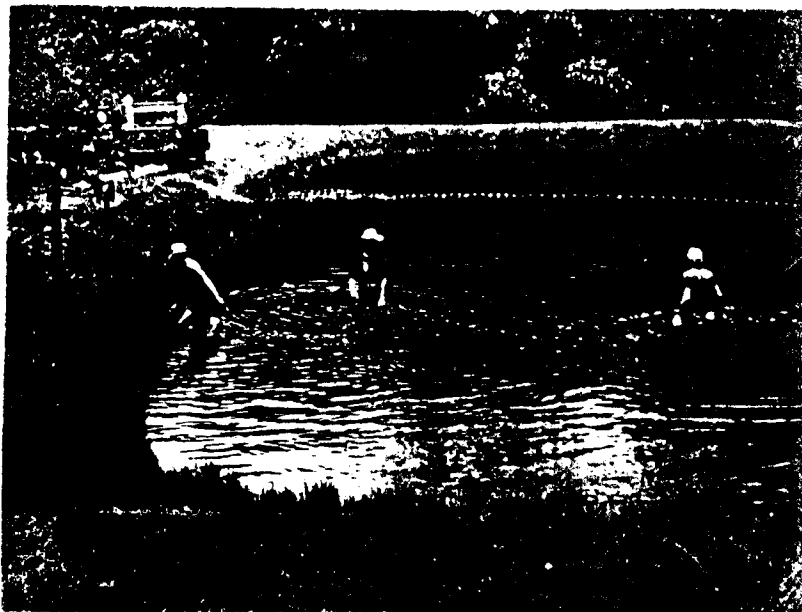
of

T R O P I C S H O R E

SEASHORE PASPALUM

Paspalum vaginatum

In Hawaii and the
Pacific Basin



DESCRIPTION

Seashore paspalum cv. Tropic Shore was developed and released by the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and the Hawaii Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii. 'Tropic Shore' is a perennial creeping grass that is stoloniferous and rhizomatous. It forms a thick mat of growth. Stolons grow to over 4 feet in length. The foliage normally grows to a height of 15 inches, but under conditions of high fertility, it may grow up to 20 inches in height. Seed heads consist of two, paired racemes which spread as they mature. Leaves are dark green and somewhat rolled toward the tips.

ADAPTATIONS

Seashore paspalum is one of the most salt-tolerant grasses known. It will grow in fresh or brackish water. It is adapted to low-elevation sites along the edge of canals, ponds, and streams, where it grows at and slightly above and below the normal tide where it makes a tight protective cover if fertility is adequate. Seashore paspalum has the ability to thrive in wet, salty conditions and grows along the coastline in many tropical and subtropical areas of the world. The natural range of seashore paspalum extends to both hemispheres and it is found growing on seacoasts from Australia to Southern Spain and from Argentina and Chile to Baja California and North Carolina. Its distribution is pan-tropical and it is indigenous or naturalized throughout the Pacific. It grows in saltwater coastal marshes and coastal mud and sand flats in the Hawaiian Islands, American Samoa, Caroline Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

USES

Erosion Control : The primary use of 'Tropic Shore' seashore paspalum is for stabilizing the shoreline of ponds, canals and streams having brackish water. Once established, this grass provides good protection from strong waves. It is especially useful in areas subject to waves from motorboat traffic. It has been less aggressive with regard to growing out in the water than other grass strains tested. This is important to aquaculture harvesting operations.

Livestock : 'Tropic Shore' may be used for pasture. It should be especially useful under saline conditions.

Beautification : 'Tropic Shore' can be used for lawns that have salty, boggy soils or where water with a high salt content is used for watering. It may also be grown using fresh water for irrigation.

ESTABLISHMENT

'Tropic Shore' is established vegetatively. Seeds are not available. Mature stolons, with or without roots, make good planting material for pond and stream banks. Best results are obtained by planting at or just below the normal water level. Planting is easily accomplished by pushing the stolons into the soil where it is soft and muddy. Stolons thrown on very wet, boggy areas will generally grow, especially where they are covered by water. The drier the situation, the greater the care must be for a successful planting. Large, dry area plantings can be established by providing irrigation and planting in tractor-made furrows. On non-saline areas, 'Tropic Shore' responds to nitrogen fertilizer. 'Tropic Shore' is usually not responsive to fertilizer under saline conditions. In shoreline stabilization, the only place fertilizer is warranted is where fresh water is used or where the grass is growing in fresh water seepage areas.

MANAGEMENT

Very little maintenance is necessary once 'Tropic Shore' becomes established on stream or pond banks. Mowing, or the use of approved herbicides along bank edges to control weedy plants during establishment, will promote the formation of a solid, uniform stand.

When using very high salt content water to irrigate 'Tropic Shore', one must be sure that ample water is applied and that good leaching is possible to prevent excess salt accumulation. Careful application of such water is necessary to avoid damaging any relatively salt-sensitive plants that may be growing nearby.