

## MEYER (Z-52) ZOYSIA

By FRED V. GRAU, DIRECTOR, AND ALEXANDER M. RADKO, AGRONOMIST, USGA GREEN SECTION

What is Meyer (Z-52) zoysia?

Meyer (Z-52) zoysia is a strain of *Zoysia japonica* which produces a turf somewhat finer in texture than that produced by common Japanese lawngrass (*Zoysia japonica*). It appears to be a type intermediate between common zoysia and manilagrass (*Zoysia matrella*). It was selected at Arlington in 1941 and it has been grown at Arlington and at Beltsville since that time.

What is the significance of the name "Meyer"?

Frank N. Meyer was a plant explorer for the Division of Plant Exploration and Introduction for the Bureau of Plant Industry. He was born in Holland in 1875; while he lived in the United States, he resided in California, Missouri, and Washington, D. C. He lived in Washington while he worked for the Government. Mr. Meyer's first exploration in Korea was in August 1905. The first collection of zoysia seed was made by him July 15, 1906. It was received by the Department of Agriculture, November 13, 1906, as PEI #19425. This seed was collected in Korea and came in as *Zoysia pungens*. Later this name was changed to *Osterdania pungens* and still later to *Zoysia japonica*, the name it carries today.

The last expedition made by Frank N. Meyer was in 1918. On June 1, 1918, his body was found floating in the Yangtze (Yellow) River. It was assumed that he had drowned.

What is the range of adaptation?

Meyer zoysia has been tested quite widely and is now under increase in at least 15 states. It should do well in most locations within the triangular area which has as its points Philadelphia, St. Louis and Norfolk. This is the area commonly known as the "crabgrass belt". In this area crabgrass is a serious pest, and Meyer zoysia is a serious competitor to crabgrass. Meyer zoysia is giving a good account of itself at these points: Kings-

### NEW GREEN SECTION SERVICE SUBSCRIBERS

Bunton Seed Co., Louisville, Ky.  
California Spray-Chemical Co., Richmond, Calif.  
Dillon, C. Douglas, Far Hills, N. J.  
Garland Manufacturing Co., Detroit, Mich.  
Langford, Wm. E., Chicago, Ill.  
Letherman's Seed Co., Canton, Ohio  
Means, Gardiner C., Vienna, Va.  
Milan, Jack, Baltimore, Md.  
Maryland National Capital Parks & Planning Commission, Silver Spring, Md.  
Miller Products Co., Portland, Ore.  
Moss, T. J., Big Horn, Wyo.  
Patten, Lee, Seed Co., Jersey City, N. J.  
\*Piping Rock Club, Locust Valley, N. Y.  
Sears, Roebuck & Co., Chicago, Ill.  
Sowa Chemical Co., New York, N. Y.  
Spears, Woodford, & Sons, Paris, Ky.  
Tait, Geo., & Sons, Inc., Norfolk, Va.  
Yuma County Farmers' Marketing Assn., Yuma, Ariz.

\* The first golf club in the United States and also the first USGA member club to take out a Green Section Service Subscription.

ton, R. I.; Long Island; New Brunswick, N. J.; Philadelphia and State College, Pa.; Washington, D. C.; University of Virginia; Pinehurst, N. C.; Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio; Louisville and Lexington, Ky.; St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo.; Omaha, Neb.; Salt Lake City, Utah; and Los Angeles, Cal. The Green Section has distributed parent stock to many member golf clubs, Green Section Service Subscribers, and experiment stations.

### Suits all Types of Turf

For what purpose is Meyer zoysia turf acceptable?

Virtually all types of turf, including sunny home lawns (and light shade), golf course fairways, athletic fields, playgrounds, park areas, and cemetery turf.

What special advantages does Meyer zoysia offer?

When it is well established and maintained, it produces a very dense turf which is practically weed-free during summer. It thrives in hottest summer when many other grasses are semi-dormant. Relatively little maintenance is required. It is resistant to drought, to in-

sects, and to wear. It is relatively easy to mow even with a hand mower when mowed regularly. It appears to thrive on all kinds of soils.

What are its disadvantages?

Poor winter color is the chief disadvantage, coupled with the fact that winter weeds come in while it is dormant. This can be overcome fairly satisfactorily by seeding adapted, improved cool-season grasses into the zoysia turf. The fact that Meyer zoysia grows rather slowly may be a disadvantage in some cases. On golf tees, for example, scar injuries may be rather slow to heal unless it is fertilized well or combined with a strong cool-season grass. It will not tolerate dense shade. It prefers open sun but will tolerate partial shade.

Meyer zoysia must be planted vegetatively. It will produce a good crop of seed when handled properly. Turf produced from this seed appears to be nearly as satisfactory as turf produced by the parent plant. There are, however, many "off-type" plants. There is need for further testing, and seed will not be available for some time.

How may Meyer zoysia be planted?

It may be planted by the use of sprigs or plugs, or it may be sodded. Sprigs may be planted successfully any time after the last spring frost and up to the middle of August. Plugs or blocks of sod may be moved successfully at almost any time when the soil is not frozen or baked by drought. Sprigs are rather slow to begin growth. They should be

kept moist until growth is well under way.

#### Fertilization Necessary

How should it be maintained?

Meyer zoysia should be fertilized about three times a year: early spring, early summer, and early fall. Fertilizer should be applied to the turf at the rate of 10 pounds of a 10-6-4 fertilizer (or equivalent) to 1,000 square feet at each application.

Z-52 is relatively slow-growing and does not require as frequent mowing as do some other turf grasses. Mowing at least once a week, however, will help to maintain a smooth, well-groomed turf. The mowing height may be any preferred height from 1/2-inch up. Close mowing does not hurt this grass. This turf grass will provide satisfactory turf for long periods without fertilization, an advantage when fertilizer becomes scarce.

Is Meyer zoysia available commercially?

Yes. A few small nurseries have begun to sell two-inch plugs of Meyer zoysia. Also, it has been distributed to experiment stations for testing and increase. The first plugs were sold in Washington, D. C., in May, 1951. By spring, 1952, the Green Section will have a list of suppliers which can be had by writing to:

USGA Green Section  
Plant Industry Station  
Beltsville, Md.

— • —

## AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AGRONOMY

DIGEST OF REPORT OF THE 1951 TURF COMMITTEE

The findings and conclusions of this committee again were derived from a mail survey. A high percentage of complete returns were received.

The development of Merion bluegrass is one of the bright spots in turf history, but the seed is limited and is high in price. The question was asked: "Should Merion bluegrass be offered in

mixture at this time?" Six said no, one said yes. Mixtures might cause loss of identity and may encourage adulteration. More information is needed.

#### No New Grasses

No new strains of turf grasses have been suggested to this committee for consideration since our last meeting. This committee recommends unqualifiedly