

# FLORATAM ST. AUGUSTINE GRASS

## ◆ Establishment and Maintenance Recommendations ◆

Floratam is sold in 1-foot by 2-foot blocks; four ½ of these blocks equal 1 square yard (approximate figure due to shrinkage of blocks after harvesting), and weighs about 60 pounds to a yard.

When the Floratam arrives at the designated planting area, it should be spread out and watered if it is not going to be planted the same day of purchase. It is best to put the sod in a cool place; preferably on polyethylene sheeting. **Water the sod daily until planted.** If watered in this manner, it can be kept for months.

### Planting Information

There are two methods used in planting Floratam sod:

- 1) Planting sod (grass with dirt on it) by cutting the sod into three-or-four inch plugs;  
and
- 2) Planting the sections of sod side-by-side or solid sodding

#### How to Figure the Amount of Yards of Floratam Required for Planting

The following table gives the recommended distance for planting plugs and the amount of Floratam needed to plant a 1000 square foot area.

Method of Planting	Distance On Center	Yards of Floratam Required to Plant 1000 sq. ft. Area	Approximate Coverage Time
3" plug *	12 inches	7 yards	4 months
3" plug	18 inches	3 ½ yards	7 months
3" plug	24 inches	2 yards	9 months
4" plug **	12 inches	12 ½ yards	3 months
4" plug	18 inches	6 yards	5 months
4" plug	24 inches	3 ½ yards	9 months

\* *There are 144 3-inch plugs in 1 sq. yard of Floratam.*

\*\* *There are 81 4-inch plugs in 1 sq. yard of Floratam.*

First, decide on the planting method you are going to use; the distance used for planting; and determine how many square feet of area you need to cover. Then, using the table on page 1, figure the total amount of square yards of Floratam required.

**Example:** If you are going to use 3” plugs and space the centers 12” apart, and you have 2000 sq. feet of area to plant -- you would multiply 7 yards (which is the amount required for 1000 sq. feet) by 2 to determine that 14 square yards of Floratam will be required to plant the area.

### Planting Instructions

Plugging - - - Grass should be cut in 3 or 4 inch plugs. Plugs should be planted so that the grass appears just above the surface of the ground. Pack the soil firmly around each plug. Water should be applied to a planted area immediately after planting. Additional irrigation is advised every 2-to-4 days thereafter until the plugs are established. Plugging is the best method used in planting Floratam. Plugs have a better chance of survival in extreme weather. They also have a more rapid rate of coverage because grass runners will grow out from every direction from the plug.

Plugs can also be used to spot plant a lawn infested with St. Augustine Decline (SAD). Plant these plugs about 2-feet apart throughout your lawn. Clean a spot about 6-inches in diameter, and plant the plug in the center of this clean area. Repeat this procedure whenever you plant a plug.

After planting Floratam there is sometimes an infestation of foreign grasses. These should be weeded out by hand if you have trees or shrubbery. After the Floratam has a solid mat, you will not have any problems with foreign grasses except for Dallis grass and this can be chopped out with a hoe or sprayed individually with a glyphosate or M.S.M.A., making sure you spray only the Dallis grass. This spot should be quickly covered by the Floratam in your lawn. If you have not fertilized your soil while working it up, then fertilize your grass about two (2) weeks after planting with a complete slow-release fertilizer such as 19-5-9 using 8 pounds per 1000 square feet and follow with water irrigation. This fertilization program can be used every six (6) weeks to two (2) months thereafter until the planted area is established.

## **Mowing**

This grass is coarser in texture when growing; however, when it has completely covered a lawn, these features are diminished. This is due to the fact that as the grass gains thicker coverage, the joints grow smaller in length. The leaves which might appear should be mowed. Mowing height should not be over 1 ½ inches and should be started at ½ inch as the grass is about three-fourths covered. When the lawn is completely covered, gradually raise the mowing height and keep it at the same range that appears to be the best is between one to one-and-a-half (1-1 ½ inches; however, if you do not water in dry weather, mow the grass at a two (2) inch length or as high as your lawn mower will mow.