

## **THE ENEMY:** Bermudagrass (*Cynodon dactylon*)

**Strategy:** This warm-season perennial grass that invades turf and non-crop areas. It spreads by creeping roots and stolons. This plant was originally imported from Africa and is used for lawns, pastures, and even some golf courses. In our area the plant can exist, but as soon as the first small frost hits us it dies off. It forms very thick carpets of grass with little amount of rooted material, thus you can see the soil if you lift up the plant.

**Attack:** Bermudagrass normally spreads into areas as a contaminate on shoes and other fabrics. Once established it will slowly invade turf grass by its roots spreading underground and then sending its vegetative growth up. The plant looks great in the hot summer, but as soon as the fall frost hits, the plant goes brown and looks terrible. The plant also forms thousands of seeds (looks similar to Crabgrass) which complicates the problem.

**Defense:** Make sure you don't spread this weed. This can be done by keeping your fabrics and other items clean of any 'organic hitchhikers'. Once the weed is established mechanical control is nearly impossible. Not only are rhizomes impossible to remove, but if you pull out the plant and some parts fall back onto the ground, they can re-root. Super-charged Roundup is this: High rate (2-4% solution), addition of Ammonium sulfate (fertilizer), and accurate application. Expect only about a 50% control, and when the plant is up and healthy again, hit it again and finish the plant off with a late summer application (before the frost) and replant the areas with desirable grass. There is new product coming to market so stay tuned. Make sure that you have the right weed by contacting your local weed authority.