

# How We Converted Bermuda Pasture to Organic Vegetables

- **Weaken Bermudagrass through:**
  - **Winter Tillage (no delay in organic certification) or,**
  - **Glyphosate suppression (36-month transition to organic status beginning with the last herbicide application date.)**
- **Establish a season-long weed-suppressive summer cover crop. We choose sudangrass and/or sorghum-sudangrass. Planting is done on or shortly after May 1<sup>st</sup> —the recommended time in SE OK. The standard broadcast seeding rate is 30#/acre. We use a somewhat higher rate of 40#–45#, especially if the previous stand of bermudagrass was vigorous and thick.**
- **Sudangrass and sorghum-sudangrass will be ready for its first mowing around mid-July, when seed heads first appear. Mow using a rotary bushhog or flail mower, leaving at least 6”–8” of stubble; more might be left in a drought. This encourages re-growth.**
- **A second mowing may be done around August 1. Again, use a rotary bushhog or flail mower, but mow close to the ground. Follow with seedbed tillage.**
- **Plant a fall cover crop on or after August 15. Be certain to include inoculated legumes (clovers, vetch, winter peas, etc.), because annual sorghums tie up nitrogen temporarily. Rye or wheat, alone, will do poorly.**
- **Incorporate the cover crop in spring to plant vegetables.**

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