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Lethal Viral Necrosis St. Augustinegrass Cultivar Alternatives

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Cultivars	Considerations in Southern Florida	Other Notes
Bitterblue	An older variety of St. Augustinegrass. It is quite susceptible to gray leafspot (*Pyricularia grisea*) fungal disease and has greater large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) susceptibility than Floratam. Shade tolerance better than Floratam. Mowing, irrigation and fertilization needs similar to Floratam.	May be Bitterblue "types" rather than one genetically distinct cultivar. Genetic work being done at University of Florida to further define "types."
CitraBlue (not yet LVN tested)	A new University of Florida release. Good disease resistance to large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate), take-all root rot (*Gaeumannomyces graminis* var. *graminis* and gray leafspot (*Pyricularia grisea*). Denser lower growth, better shade tolerance & slightly better drought tolerance than Floratam.	This turf has **not yet been tested for resistance to lethal viral necrosis**.
Classic (not yet LVN tested)	Greater large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) susceptibility than Floratam. Other management and pest problems similar to Floratam. Good cold tolerance.	This turf has **not yet been tested for resistance to lethal viral necrosis**.
DeltaShade	Management and pest problems similar to Floratam, except greater large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) susceptibility. Shade tolerance better than Floratam.	A lighter green variety
Palmetto	Typically more susceptible to large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) and gray leafspot (*Pyricularia grisea*) fungal diseases than Floratam. Insects can also be a problem. It is slightly more dwarf than Floratam.	A lighter green variety. Quite tolerant of herbicides listed for St. Augustinegrass when used according to label.
ProVista (not yet LVN tested)	A Scotts modified Floratam with two gene modifications - one for resistance to glyphosate, and the second for shade tolerance.	This turf has **not yet been tested for resistance to lethal viral necrosis**.
Raleigh	Very susceptible to large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) fungal disease in southern Florida, and chinch bugs. Better adapted to clay, medium to low pH soils. Very good cold tolerance.	Foliar iron supplements may help manage its tendency to yellow. Quite tolerant of herbicides listed for St. Augustinegrass when used according to label.

Dwarf Cultivars	Considerations in Southern Florida
Captiva	Not recommended in Florida due to establishment after planting and pathogen problems.
Delmar	Susceptible to large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) fungal disease, chinch bug, and tropical sod webworm. Has a tendency to become thatchy. Good cold tolerance.
Sapphire	Susceptible to chinch bug and tropical sod webworm damage. Greater large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) susceptibility than Floratam. Also quite susceptible to other fungal pathogens, and becomes thatchy.
Seville	Susceptible to chinch bug and tropical sod webworm damage. Greater large patch (*Rhizoctonia solani* isolate) susceptibility than Floratam. Also quite susceptible to other fungal pathogens, and becomes thatchy. Cold sensitive.

Use reputable vendors when purchasing St. Augustinegrass cultivars. Suggested alternative cultivars may take some effort to find at retail outlets. See link below for grower sources.

It is believed that all varieties of St. Augustinegrass, bermudagrass, bahiagrass, paspalum, and crabgrass weeds can acquire lethal viral necrosis. Like Floratam, all St. Augustinegrass cultivars may develop elongated yellow spotting on leaf blades and have slowed growth. However, **only the Floratam cultivar of St. Augustinegrass is known to be killed** by lethal viral necrosis. Classic, CitraBlue and ProVista cultivars have not been tested yet. Zoysiagrass is a possible replacement that does not acquire or transmit the viral pathogens. It requires a very good irrigation system along with soil preparation that incorporates some organic matter prior to planting. However, if Floratam did well on the site before succumbing to lethal viral necrosis, zoysiagrass probably also will if properly managed. Zoysiagrass has its own assortment of insect and disease problems, and requires high light levels.

Sources of Turfgrass (mostly wholesale): *https://floridaturf.com/turf*

For more information:
St. Augustinegrass for Florida Lawns (publication): *http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/LH/LH01000.pdf*
Lethal Viral Necrosis of Floratam St. Augustinegrass (publication):
http://discover.pbcgov.org/coextension/horticulture/PDF/Lethal%20Viral%20Necrosis%203.2018.pdf
Lethal Viral Necrosis of Floratam St. Augustinegrass (website):
http://discover.pbcgov.org/coextension/horticulture/Pages/Lethal-Necrosis.aspx

Sources: University of Florida - Philip Harmon, PhD, Plant Pathology; Laurie Trenholm, PhD, Environmental Horticulture; Kevin Kenworthy, PhD, Agronomy

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