Background: Argentine & Pensacola bahiagrass are forage grasses commonly grown in the Southeastern U. S. The 2018 Zone 5 Argentine bahiagrass referee has provided supporting evidence for adding a germination testing procedure that doesn’t include removing the enclosing structures (hand peeling) of Argentine bahiagrass and this year’s referee will attempt to provide supporting evidence for standardizing the testing temperature of Argentine bahiagrass. Currently the “AOSA Rules for Testing Seeds Volume 1 Principles and Procedures” lists a testing temperature of 20-35°C for Pensacola bahiagrass and a temperature of 30-35°C for all other cvs. of bahiagrass. This temperature requirement of 30-35°C creates the need for an additional germinator for testing Argentine bahiagrass and also doesn’t accurately reflect night temperatures in the Southeastern U.S. which is much closer to 20°C (68°F) than 30°C (86°F). It is proposed by the Zone 5 Referee committee to change the germination testing of Argentine bahiagrass by a rules change proposal to read:

 Substrate Temperature First Count Final Count Specific Requirements and Notes Dormant Seed

P, S 20-35°C 7 21 Light; see section 6.8b KNO3

 Ungerminated seeds

 See section 6.2f & 6.9m

 In order to provide supporting evidence for the proposed rules change, the Zone 5 referee committee will conduct a referee consisting of 5 lots of Argentine Bahiagrass to be tested (unhulled) by participating labs for germination at both 30-35°C and 20-35°C to determine if there is a significant variation in germination results. A tetrazolium test should be conducted on the remaining un-germinated seeds on the 21st day. The results will be tabulated and if favorable will help to support a rule change proposal for vote by the membership at the 2020 AOSA/SCST annual meeting in Indianapolis.