

Crop Watch

This year's harvest is starting out with many challenges. First there have been the voles and the excessive rains. Then there were the rains. After that...there was more rain. As recent as this past Monday, farmers had to stay out of the fields due to weather. So where do we stand today? Here's a summary: All the Fawn has been cut and 70% has been harvested. Yield reports are that the crop is 10-30% below average. Most of the Gulf and annual ryegrasses have been cut; only 10-15% have actually been harvested. Initial yield reports on Gulf are that the crop is significantly below average. We hope that the proprietaries will fare better. 80% of the orchardgrasses have been cut and 20-25% has been harvested. Reports indicate lower than average yields. Turf-type tall fescues are mostly cut and turf type perennials are being cut.



Market Watch

It looks like this new crop season is starting out with a whole lot of price adjusting. With a delayed harvest, we do not yet know where annual ryegrass will end up. Both growers and buyers appear to be sitting until we have a better handle on the crop. The same holds true for tall fescue. On the softer side, perennial ryegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, and creeping red fescue harvests/inventories are adjusting prices downward.

More Newbies!

Don't forget to check out our new annual ryegrasses that were mentioned last month: Big Boss and Attain. You can learn more by giving us a call or visiting www.smithseed.com/seed/forage/annualrye and clicking on the appropriate link. In addition to hot new ryegrasses, you might have



heard about our two newest orchardgrasses - Persist and Takena II. We mentioned them in our February newsletter. These are both looking great in university and extension trials. In Kentucky, Takena II was rated as one of the most vigorous varieties and one of the latest maturing. That's a great combination!

Additionally, we recently received these comments from an extension agent in North Carolina:

"I looked at one of the two Persist plots I planted in the fall of 04. The field had a lot of volunteer ryegrass in it. However, the Persist looked good. The stand was thin but what was there looked good. On the other hand, another variety was planted at the same time with the same drill on the same land but in a different plot, was non-existent. The ryegrass had completely overtaken that variety."



"I visited the other test plot of Persist, where it is being grazed and quite frankly--abused. But that is the reason we put it on working farms to see how it will exist in the real world. It is doing very well in spite of a mild drought this spring and some yearling bulls grazing on it during the winter after it was established in the preceding fall. One interesting note, this plot is directly adjacent to a field of (a certain novel endophyte fescue)--the cattle are hardly touching the (novel endophyte fescue) but are grazing the Persist really hard. This was observed during the first week of July and we don't expect cattle to graze cool season grasses very hard in the heat of summer, especially fescue, because they move to native Bermuda grasses, crab grass, etc. But in this particular plot they were readily grazing the Persist." Learn more about both Takena II and Persist at www.smithseed.com/seed/forage/orchardgrass.

Reminder - Order Early to Avoid Running Out of Seed!

GIVE LOTS OF LEAD TIME! Trucking/rail has not gotten better, and may be worse this fall than last year.