

30 Years - WOW! Congratulations to Paul Zehr and Jason Schrock for being in business and working well together for over 30 years as co-owners of Smith Seed!



Crop Watch

It looks like we may have up to twelve months or more of tight supplies ahead of us with multiple crops. Thanks to a combination of no carryover, empty pipelines, and excellent movement, tall fescue looks to be quite tight throughout the rest of fall, spring and even into the first part of New Crop '07.

Annual ryegrass movement has also been excellent, causing some to think that this year's harvest/shipping challenges will be mirrored next harvest.

Improved fine-fescues, especially Chewings and hard fescues, are nearly non-existent, and it's only October! Orchardgrass will also likely be used up. So as far as grasses go, I guess its time to go back and push perennial ryegrass, bluegrass and common creeper!

Think Quick

As you start to consider new varieties and options for next year's lineup make sure you are thinking quick. As you know, one of the most important features to contractors and homeowners is quick establishment. You also know that even a couple of days makes a difference. So make sure you include the quick establishing **Renaissance perennial ryegrass** in your line-up. As reported on our January '06 newsletter and on our website, Renaissance is significantly faster than many other varieties.



New for this year is **Wild Horse Kentucky Bluegrass**, boasting up to 93% germination in only after 10 days. Wild Horse has also been recognized for a very high spring green-up.



Can you afford to wait?

Humans Triumph Over Geese (at least for now)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a new rule giving more flexibility to state wildlife agencies, landowners, and airports in controlling resident Canada goose populations. The ruling has provisions for killing geese without a permit "provided certain reporting and monitoring requirements are fulfilled." Additionally, the ruling gives individual States the ability to expand hours and reduce hunting restrictions. Finally, the ruling authorizes and defines a special program called a "management take" allowing the "harvest" of geese by other methods outside of regular hunting season. You can read all about it in the August 10th Federal Register or by contacting your local fish and game department.

Future Labor Shortage Forecasted

If you thought good help was hard to find now, just wait! According a report in the Home Channel News Weekly Digest, the Census Bureau projects that we will have nearly 9% less 35-44 year-olds in the workforce over the next decade. At least for our industry, where finding good people is already a hard enough challenge, that means there may be fewer mature sales, supervisory, and management folks available. So if today you are a little road-weary, maybe grumpy and wishing you could retire now, but knowing that you've got another ten years here are a few tips:

- Buck up man! Your staff still needs you!
- Be a visionary, but also find ways to empower and train others. Off-seasons and downtime are great opportunities for collective and one-on-one training.
- Treat your staff right. They deserve it and you will need them in the future.
- Defy the odds. Developing a strong mature staff now will put you that much farther ahead of the competition in the future.