



Crop Watch

At this time of year there are a few factors we can look at when considering what seed availability will look like come next harvest time. In Oregon, the weather patterns have brought an extended period of unusual nighttime freezing temperatures. As expected, this has caused some heaving and added stress especially to new plantings. In a few weeks, if the forecast holds true, the warmer temperatures will tell us how the various crops are responding to this weather pattern. The one crop that is of most concern right now is crimson clover. Secondly, some new plantings of perennial ryegrass don't look very good. Other than that, below is a current assessment of how selected species' new crop acres are looking, as of the first of February:

ACREAGE ASSESSMENT – How's Next Year's Crop Looking?

| Species | Comments |
|---------------------|---|
| Annual Ryegrass | Some heaving from frosty nights. Fields should recover as temperatures warm. |
| Perennial Ryegrass | A mixed bag with reports, with some "okay" looking fields to "poor" looking third year fields. Similar to annual, many fields may recover as temperatures warm. |
| Tall Fescue | Fields looking good with no reported crop concerns. |
| Kentucky Bluegrass | Crop looks fine, but acreage reductions are expected to continue in favor of competing crops. |
| Creeping Red Fescue | Canadians report they expect lower yields unless spring is very wet. Acres are down 10-20% as well. |
| Orchardgrass | Expect average crop; acres remain down. |
| Red Clovers | Fields appear somewhat affected by cold weather; don't look as good as normal. |
| Crimson Clover | Very concerned about the crop due to extended cold temps. |



Bestfor Plus Makes Impressive Marks

Bestfor Plus posted some impressive numbers this year in Michigan and Kentucky forage trials. In Michigan's East Lansing location, Bestfor Plus was the top yielding ryegrass entry in both year one and year three of the trial, and took the top spot for the three-year total as well. Even in Michigan's Lake City location, where Bestfor Plus suffered some winter injury in '05, it came back to be the highest yielder in '06 and again had the top spot for the first and three year yield totals.

In Kentucky, where Bestfor Plus had some winter injury the first year, it came back and has the top spot for two-year yield total in the '04 Lexington planting. While not applicable to every climate or situation, Bestfor Plus definitely has a home. To learn more about this variety, give us a call or visit www.SmithSeed.com.