



Crop Watch

On Dec. 19, 2007, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 was signed into law, increasing the minimum requirement for Renewable Fuel Standards from 9 billion gallons/year of biofuel to 36 billion gallons by 2022. While the impact of this legislation may be good for the country as a whole, and likely some parts of our industry will find opportunities to capitalize on new technologies and the like, it does appear that one thing is near-certain: The grass seed farmer may have numerous options for the crops he can grow, some, if not many, more profitable than grass - at least at today's prices. Learn more from resources like www.ethanolrfa.org. By the way, there is \$750 MILLION dollars in ANNUAL grant monies behind this law as well.

Annual Ryegrass - What A Plant!

Have you ever pondered how valuable annual ryegrass is? These plants are one of the Creator's majestic wonders. Not only is annual ryegrass easy to grow, but it's adaptability may be one of the highest of the plant kingdom. It may not be able to survive in all climates, but it can grow in most, even for a short period of time. Furthermore, annual ryegrass seed is relatively inexpensive (compared to many other crops) to produce. What an amazing little plant!

One of the many applications that is yet to be maximized to its full potential is its use as a cover crop. According to Dan Towery at www.ryegrasscovercrop.com, the lists of benefits to ryegrass as a cover crop in the Midwest is quite extensive. They include:

- Improving drought resistance by creating "macropores" so corn and soybeans roots can reach moisture under the hardpan.
- Erosion control by creating quick ground cover
- Nutrient recycling, up to 60-80 lbs/acre of nitrogen/year, actually paying for the cost of the seed.
- Nitrogen recover as annual ryegrass helps keep the nitrogen in the soil profile for the next year's crop.
- Soil Improvement from biomass that increases the organic matter and fertility after spring burn down.
- Quicker Transition to No-till, up to half the period.
- Weed Suppression thanks to annual ryegrass' unmatched seedling vigor.
- Increased Water Infiltration as annual ryegrass' roots create pathways throughout the soil.
- Soybean Cyst Control under selected environments by reducing the cyst egg hatch.
- Forage feed for growers who are able to take cuttings or grazings during the cover crop season.

You can learn more about using annual ryegrass as a cover crop by visiting ryegrasscovercrop.com.

THE AMAZING ANNUAL RYEGRASS PLANT!!

- A global lawn grass covering thousands of sq. miles of the globe.
- A forage crop producing food for millions of livestock, poultry, and even fish that then is converted into food for hundreds of millions of people of all races, nationalities and classes.
- An erosion control tool which protects millions, maybe billions of people from landslides, mud slides, and excessive hazardous runoffs.
- A natural recycler helping purify the environment, reduce water pollution and air pollution that literally affects the whole globe and ecosystem.
- A soil builder, disease fighter, weed barrier and more.