

Covenant II turf-type tall fescue

Covenant II Tall Fescue Debuts

Twice as good!

Our newest tall fescue variety, Covenant II, will be available for winter and early spring shipment. Covenant II was bred from a wide genetic pool

of elite tall fescue genetics. Covenant II should provide a high level of uniformity, density, turf quality and disease resistance. Look for more information about Covenant II on our website and in future newsletters.

Favorable Fall Movement Keeps Prices Up

As the fall season wraps up, most are concluding that movement in general was pretty favorable. We began the season with little carryover throughout the entire pipeline, including at the production level. Once seed shipments began, demand seemed to never ease up until just the past week or so. We still expect shipments throughout this month to be good.

What also seems to be true this year is that earlier price increases flowed quickly down the pipeline and were seen uniformly. Many a season, we hear regional price disparities, usually due to selected carryover by one or two large market players. Aside from the beginning of this season, we heard very little of such talk. Instead, most indications are that demand was sufficient to keep retailers, distributors and wholesalers plenty busy, with little need to compete in price wars.

So what do we expect for Spring 2012? It is hard to see any reason for prices to soften. Both production companies and wholesale distributors will likely be crunching many numbers this next 30-60 days as they try to figure out what they have left to sell before next year's harvest, what they need to purchase, pricing levels, etc. It has been a few years since we were concerned about inventory levels this far away from new crop. The question of "availability" is once again becoming as important as the question of price. The return of booking forward positions appears to once again be back in style.



Poa Trivialis - Friend, Foe or Both?

Known by many names, including rough bluegrass, roughstalk bluegrass, and poa triv, *Poa trivialis* is the perennial cousin of *Poa annua*.



(pic from agry.purdue.edu)

Both have a place where they are desired, and a place where they are undesired.

In Oregon, selected varieties of *Poa trivialis* are grown mostly for the overseeding market. However, a tremendous amount of naturalized *Poa trivialis* grows throughout the state. Its prostrate growth, vigorous and shallow root system and innate ability to reproduce by seed make it a public enemy of grass seed producers.

Hated by turfgrass professionals and homeowners alike for ruining perfectly nice fescue, ryegrass, and bluegrass lawns, *poa trivialis* may be a friend to some, but it is a foe to many. "Must be free of *Poa trivialis*" is the cry!

Poa trivialis plants are stubborn to kill and the ground is full of *poa triv* seeds deposited over prior decades. This is true throughout much of North America, but Oregon's cool mild climate with frequent light rains is the perfect growing environment for *poa trivialis*, and all it takes to awaken these trouble-makers is a cool, wet spring, like we had this past year. To make matters worse, this stuff is also one of the harder crops to separate out at the seed cleaners!

So, while the industry continues to look for ways to reduce *poa triv* and other crop/weed contamination, the truth is, "crop-free" seed is not always easy, or feasible to produce, let alone obtain. This we know is definitely the case with our friend/foe *poa triv*.