SMITH SEED SERVICES

Snippets

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Spring Green Festuloium

Good news for those of you who have come to value festuloliums - Spring Green is available this year. After some prior production challenges, it looks like there should be a better supply of uncertified Spring Green for this spring and certified production for next year. For those unfamiliar with Spring Green, here's a little bit about it:

Originating from the breeding work of Mike Casler at the University of Wisconsin, Spring Green first came to the market about 15 years ago. There have been numerous other festuloliums developed since then, but Spring Green remains one of the standard top-performing varieties in its class.

Spring Green has better-than-average winter hardiness, is a consistent high yielder, and usually has a 2-3 year life span. It can be compared to many ryegrasses in terms of relative feed value, yet provides better summer grazing over ryegrass, especially under higher temperatures. Being a tetraploid, it is highly palatable and easily digestible.

Spring Green can be grazed, hayed or green chopped. It mixes well with other grasses and legumes and can be fed to all livestock categories. Spring Green has a wide geographic adaptation, stretching from Southern Canada to the Northern half of the transition zone.

Spring Green is fast establishing, and early maturing, capable of producing 5-9 tons of DM/acre. Spring Green has been evaluated at numerous university sites throughout the years providing ample comparison data. Contact us to find out if Spring Green should be part of your lineup.

Yellow Blossom Sweetclover, *Melilotus officinalis*

Not REALLY a Clover, but definitely a valuable legume

Yellow blossom sweetclover is not a true clover but is probably more closely related to alfalfa. It is typically a biennial, grows 2-6 feet high, and as the name implies, produces yellow flowers. It is used for forage, cover cropping, conservation, and honey making.

While not a huge forage producer (under 3 tons/acre), yellow blossom sweet clover has a valuable taproot growth that penetrates deep down in soil - up to five feet. This deep tap root and root branches give sweetclover a greater ability than most other cover crops in extracting potassium, phosphorus and other soil nutrients from insoluble minerals. Root branches take in minerals from seldom-disturbed soil horizons, nutrients that become available as the tops and roots decompose.

It is also the most drought-tolerant of forage legumes, and is quite winter-hardy. In temperate climates with mild summers it can survive and thrive through a second year of production, contributing up to 275 lbs. N/A and adding valuable organic matter. Sweetclover grows where alfalfa, red clover and white clover fail, such as on clay pan soils or on sands and tolerates low fertility and wet conditions.

So where does the name "sweetclover" come from? Probably it relates to the fact that when the leaves are crushed, the plant puts out a distinct sweet aroma. In earlier varieties the source of this aroma was identified as coumarin and used to develop the anti-coagulant drug called 'warfarin'. Since these anti-coagulant properties were found to be detrimental to grazing livestock modern sweetclover varieties have been bred to be low in coumarin.

We offer yellow blossom in both raw form as well as with our exclusive NitroCoat® coating and pre-inoculation. Learn more about our clover offerings and NitroCoat® at SmithSeed.com

NITRO-COAT for Clover