



Crop Comments/Market Observations

Willamette Valley farmers are beginning to feel hopeful that spring indeed will come this year. There has been enough warm days to wake up the crops, get the fertilizer buggies rolling, and even entice some growers to try to plant spring crops without getting stuck.

While spring warm-up continues to be slow coming in the Willamette Valley, seed shipments to rest of the country have been relatively encouraging. Many distributors are also reporting good initial movement to their dealer network. Early consumption of forage seed, especially legumes seems to be going well too. Turfgrass seed movement in the southern part of the US seems to be on a normal pace, while some northern areas are still awaiting winter to go away.

The industry has seen a number of pricing adjustments over the past 90 days and more are likely to come. The next 90 days will provide important consumption information as well as new crop production outlooks. Clovers and other legumes generally seem to be tight, with solid to strengthening prices. Perennial grass species range from soft to stable. Annual ryegrass seems to be solid to strong.

Hustle Diploid Forage Perennial Ryegrass

Last month's newsletter highlighted our winter-hardy, late-maturing Payday tetraploid perennial ryegrass. As a compliment to Payday, we also offer Hustle diploid forage perennial ryegrass. Here are some key features of Hustle:



High Winter Activity - Hustle is a New Zealand variety bred to stay more active throughout the winter months, making it quite useful in regions with mild winters.

Diploid Strength - As a diploid ryegrass, Hustle has lower crown and more prostrate growth. The characteristics give it the ability to better withstand foot traffic and tight grazing, especially associated with continuously grazed pastures, and grazing livestock such as sheep, goats, and horses. Hustle is an ideal component for multi-purpose and horse pasture mixtures.

Fast Establishing/Mid-Late Maturity - Hustle gets out of the ground and establishes rapidly and remains vegetative through the mid-late spring season.

High Forage Quality - Hustle provides high yields and great forage quality to provide the desired gain for grazing, silage, and hay production.

Teff Time is Fast Approaching

If you are like many distributors, you have noticed that teff grass, a once uncommon seed, now seems to have a select but steady audience. As one customer described it, there is a set of producers who seem to want to put up a certain amount of teff hay each year. Teff is also showing up on solar farms and in warm-season cover crop applications.

Regardless of how it is used, now is the time to get your seed booked, as the short window for planting teff is fast approaching. Once soil temperatures get over 65° F, it's time to plant! Once planted, this Ethiopian jewel can produce up to 8 tons/acre of some of the finest endophyte-free grass hay a horse would ever lay eyes on. Other livestock love it too.

Teff is quite small - 1.3 million seeds per lb! That's one of the big reasons why it is usually coated at 50%. The coating helps with ballistics to ensure that it gets planted evenly. Be sure to remind your farmers to plant it no deeper than 1/4" on a firm seedbed. Too early, too deep, too fluffy of soil - these all spell teff trouble. But done right, teff is quite special.



Learn more about teff at SmithSeed.com. Contact your Smith Seed Representative for pricing and availability.