

The AMPAC Impact

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A Quarterly News Publication

Spring in Oregon

By Brian Eder

Life in the Willamette Valley is a little colder than average, but looking quite normal... dodging showers and seeing some occasional sunshine with temperatures in the 50's. There has been some unusual activity on the farm this winter/spring. Growers have been encouraged by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and seed companies to plow out fields with quality issues. Most of these fields were either turf type tall fescue or turf type perennial ryegrass. With the already high inventory numbers, the seed industry is trying to do everything possible to get supply and demand back on track. Many growers were left scratching their heads trying to decide what to plant this winter/spring... wheat, oats, etc. The options are limited for growers with the small amount of grass seed acres being planted, low price of grain, and cannery crops at maximum production. It looks like many growers in the Willamette Valley will have open ground in the future looking for something to plant so they can continue paying their bills. Grass seed fields look to be in average shape with no major concerns about crop quality or yield. However, keep in mind it's still early in the season and a lot can happen between now and harvest.

We will be experiencing some interesting times in the grass seed industry. Not only as a whole, but also with the different grass types we produce here in the Willamette Valley. For instance, the 2008 certified perennial ryegrass acres were down 38% from 2005; the 2008 certified tall fescue acres were up 20% from 2005; and since 2003, certified fine fescue acres have increased 54%. These numbers can be explained by many factors, but in the end it all comes back to simple economics – supply and demand; which is ultimately what drives the market price. We face some challenges in the future for the grass seed industry, but with the work of everyone involved, things will cycle through and there will be more optimism in Oregon again.

AMPAC Has You Covered

With Our New Turf Type Tall Fescue

By Marcy Arbelbide

I thought it would be helpful if I matched up the experimental names of our latest Turf Type Tall Fescues with Ampac's varietal names hoping that it will be less confusing for you when accessing the current NTEP trial information. (All Data from the 2006 NTEP trial/ 2007 data)

Let's begin with the Legend of Cochise...



COCHISE IV (RKCL) – The Legend Continues and NOW SPREADS...

- ❖ #1 Quality Rating (Schedule A)
- ❖ #1 Leaf Texture
- ❖ High Traffic Tolerance
- ❖ Rutgers University selection
- ❖ Semi-dwarf growth habit
- ❖ Dark Green Color
- ❖ Dense Turf
- ❖ Excellent Overall Disease Resistance
- ❖ Demonstrated Spreading Activity in the Rutgers University trials

COCHISE IV continues to be the #1 choice for a top all around turf type tall fescue. (Available Now)

Continued on page 2



TRIO (IS-TF-152) – Ampac’s Trio of Excellence...

- ❖ Dark Green Color
- ❖ Dense Turf
- ❖ High Sod strength
- ❖ True Dwarf Low Mow Upright Growth Habit
- ❖ Fine Leaf Blade
- ❖ Early Spring Green up
- ❖ Shade Tolerant
- ❖ Improved Disease Resistance

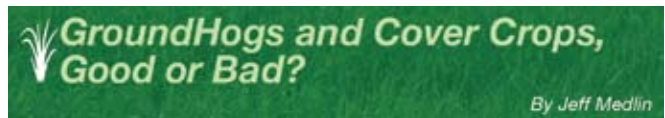
TRIO is a must have where fine quality, strong sod is desired. (Available Fall 2009)



SIDEWINDER (IS-TF-138) – Spreading type PLUS salt tolerance

- ❖ Superior Overall Turf Quality – Front page on both Schedules A and B
- ❖ Semi-Dwarf Growth Habit
- ❖ Dark Green Color
- ❖ Traffic Tolerant
- ❖ Early Spring Green up
- ❖ Improved Spreading Activity
- ❖ Improved Disease Resistance – Rating high for Brown Patch resistance
- ❖ HIGH Salt Tolerance – Sidewinder showed the highest germination, survival and establishment rate of all the varieties tested in a 30 day Sodic/ Saline test at Radix Research.

Sidewinder is a variety you can be confident will perform with excellent overall turf quality in your area and across the U.S. (Available Fall 2009).



The groundhog (woodchuck or whistlepig in some parts of the country) is a rodent that many farmers want to eliminate due to the potential agronomic damages it can cause. I personally know of many farmers that have blamed the groundhog for broken axles on tractors, broken legs on animals, and crop damage. According to researched information, groundhogs are widely distributed in North America, and found as far north as Alaska with habitat extending to Alabama. Groundhogs even have their own holiday observed in early February (the 2nd to be exact) each year.



So why am I writing a forage article about an animal like the groundhog? I want to take this opportunity to introduce a new product from Ampac Seed Company. **GroundHog Radish** has great agronomic traits beneficial to the agricultural community when utilized as a cover crop. **GroundHog Radish** has been shown to scavenge and capture nutrients from below the root area of most crops in order to help prevent loss of nutrients (nitrogen in particular) and make it (N) more available for spring plantings. Rapid fall growth of radish species has the potential to capture large amounts of Nitrogen deep in soil profile (greater than 100 pounds of N per acre). Radishes also have shown to help suppress nematode activity as well as help suppress winter annual weeds.

Radishes planted in late summer or early fall usually die with the first hard killing frost. The radish root will decompose through the winter leaving a golf ball size “pilot hole” improving soil aeration and compaction issues. In order to maximize the root depth, plantings should be done when the plant has the opportunity to grow when available moisture and the soil is easier to penetrate.

Recommended seeding rates are 12-15 pounds per acre at a drilled depth of approximately ¼ inch. Broadcasted rates should be 15-20 pounds per acre. Radish varieties are not winter hardy, and the tap roots can reach lengths of 12-20 inches (most of this is underground). Make sure that sufficient Nitrogen (N) is available at planting (typically 50-60 pounds of N) in order to enhance their N uptake.

Radish varieties like **GroundHog** offer palatable solutions to fall grazing needs, and help fill a gap early while cool season species continue to establish. Like other Brassica species planted for forage, the feed quality is very good; however radish varieties are typically a single grazed crop due to winterkill potential.



GroundHog Forage Radish characteristics:

- ❖ Nitrogen mining & Nutrient scavenging
- ❖ Weed suppression
- ❖ Ground aeration & Alleviate soil compaction
- ❖ Promotes water infiltration
- ❖ Pilot hole root penetration
- ❖ Reduce use of chemicals and tillage
- ❖ May provide nematode control
- ❖ Erosion control
- ❖ Improve crop yield of next years crop (i.e. soybeans or corn)

Utilizing good management practices in your forage and cropping system will allow increase in productivity. Cover crops are becoming more important as we continue to deal with local, state, and regulatory groups concerning erosion and chemical/fertilizer use and leaching. **GroundHog Radish** is a product that will enhance your forage system, fill an early forage gap, promote better fertilizer usage, increase soil permeability, and provide a way to help reduce chemical and tillage requirements. This GroundHog is definitely worth encouraging on your farm!

For more information, please visit our website at www.ampacseed.com or call our office toll free at 1-800-547-3230.