

# The AMPAC Impact

July 2007

A Quarterly News Publication



Another harvest is underway in the Northwest. After a wet week, the sun is back out again and so are the combines. While the rain did not help anything, it should not have a very big impact on overall yields either... as long as the sunny weather holds. However, the big picture evolves around alternative fuels.

The ethanol and biofuel movement have sparked a global struggle for production (corn, wheat, soybeans, sweet corn, green beans, onions, grass seed etc...) acres. The fight for production acres is holding most seed prices firm or pushing them higher. We expect this to be the trend for the next few years. High corn and soybean prices mean growers in South America are planting those crops on their best soils and putting seed production on less favorable ground. In northern Europe, growers are producing more canola and less grass seed due to the increased demand for biofuels and the subsidy changes taking place over there. Some of this displaced grass seed production is going to inexperienced eastern European countries. New Zealand's seed production acres are getting pressured by higher grossing vegetable seed production and dairies. Yes, dairies. With the rapidly increasing milk prices farmers in New Zealand are turning their best producing acres into grazing pastures. Much like South America, grass seed production acres are being pushed to the less favorable areas (no irrigation, poor soils, etc...)

Locally, growers have multiple options to choose from when deciding what to produce. High grain prices and burn bans have caused growers in Washington and Idaho to consider crops other than grass seed. In Oregon, and other parts of the Northwest, vegetable canneries were unable to contract all of their production needs this spring.

What does all this mean for us? Because prices are high everywhere, other countries are still coming to Oregon looking for us to grow seed for them. This puts producers in the driver seat as they can pick what and who they want to grow for. One source gave me the following example, "the same kentucky bluegrass grower that needed to gross \$1,100 per acre last fall, needed to gross \$1,600 this spring". So for the next few years (or as long as there is a high demand for biofuels) all production acres will be at a premium. This will stress the importance of having good grower and seed company relationships.



Pleasure + transitions faster than other perennial ryegrass in the 2005-2006 overseeding trials at Texas A&M.

Visit <http://overton.tamu.edu/ryegrass/OverseedingTables2005-06.pdf> for more information.



As I sit at my desk penning this article, a conserve water bulletin comes across the radio for my county. I am sure most of you in the East have heard the same announcement or will very soon. Though we here in central Pennsylvania are not as dry as our friends in the south eastern part of the country, but we are still experiencing a drought that is making the pastures unproductive, the yards brown, and the food plots stressed from overgrazing. If the conditions continue to be dry we can look forward to a very busy Fall with either overseeding or total renovation of pastures, lawns and food plots. Drought conditions hide a wide range of other problems that you need to be aware of. Insects (grubs, chinch bugs, etc) can devastate a lawn while in a drought and most times our customers will put the blame on the drought. Disease (Brown Patch, Gray Leaf Spot, etc) can also affect a stand of grass and the effects are hidden by the drought before they can be detected. Overgrazing a pasture or food plot can be detrimental to the stand recovering after the drought since some species may have been taken off at crown level. In times like these we can really see the benefit of improved varieties that hold up better in drought conditions, have better disease and insect resistance, lower crowns and species that thrive better in periods of drought.

In selecting varieties, look at **Tekapo**, **Bronson**, and **Oasis Chicory** for good drought tolerance and low crowns. Our tall fescue line up of **Cochise III**, **Ninja 2**, and **Expedition** work very well to withstand drought and disease pressure. **Phenom** and **Amazing GS Perennial Ryegrass** have exceptional Gray Leaf Spot resistance. AMPAC's Wildlife Perfect mixtures all contain **Plot Enhancer™ Brand Chicory** to offer a food source to the animal in these "Summer Slump" periods. Contact any of us at AMPAC to help select the best variety and species for your needs! AMPAC seed is proud to introduce a new Wildlife Perfect Food Plot program to help in marketing to the end user. AMPAC has devised an end cap unit that will hold all four of our mixtures on a display unit. Seed mixtures will be packaged in ¼ acre, ½ acre, and 1 acre bags. Since our Wildlife Perfect line has been introduced, we have found that the wildlife food plot market is asking for packaging in ¼ acre and ½ acre

bags. Most outdoor enthusiasts that plant food plots are doing so on small acreage. For the larger clients, we still offer 1 acre packaging and bulk bags. If you have not already received the Program Details on our Wildlife Perfect units, please give us a call right away so we can make sure we get all the information out to you. AMPAC has even created some incentive to help us move our line of seed over the competition!

AMPAC Seed is also excited to announce that we are now a Proud Quality Deer Management (QDMA) Supporter! AMPAC will be running advertisement in their magazine, be represented at all QDMA functions and also have our seed trialed at various locations.



*Brassica* is the scientific genus name for turnips and mustard greens that are commonly grown for winter greens throughout the southeast USA. They have been utilized by people for as long as the south has been settled and throughout Europe long before immigrants began arriving in the new world. They originated in central Asia and have been widely grown throughout Europe, India and Russia for thousands of years. Brassicas are a diverse group that also includes broccoli, cabbage, rutabaga, kale, rape and canola. They are both edible and nutritious for human consumption and they are a good source of fiber. It's the fiber that cattle can digest and utilize in their rumens which monogastric animals such as swine and people cannot. The fiber in brassicas is highly digestible to cattle and overall forage quality is excellent with digestibility levels of 70 to 90%, similar to or better than young ryegrass. Brassicas have an off flavor and preference or palatability by cattle may be slow if grown with grass. It's a plant that most cattle have not seen before so they need to get accustomed to eating it in a pasture. This can best be accomplished dividing the field into smaller paddocks and forcing them to graze all the available forage.

Ten varieties were planted at 5 lbs per acre in September 2006 at Mississippi State University. They were fertilized with 400 lbs 15-5-10 at planting and

after each harvest in November, January and March. Yield of top growth on a dry matter basis through March ranged from 5100 to 12000 lbs per acre (Table 1). Ryegrass yield during the same period in 2006-2007 ranged from 2500 to 5000 lbs per acre. Most of the brassica varieties however, did not continue to grow into April except for Dwarf Essex. Ryegrass growth peaked with an additional 2600 lbs per acre from March to April in the 2006-2007 variety trial and will yield another 2000 lbs per acre by the end of May. Brassicas will provide earlier winter and more mid-winter growth than ryegrass. They grow well together in a mixture.

Here's some information about the brassica varieties: Appin and Pasja are forage turnips and Bonar is a forage rape from Ampac Seed ([www.ampacseed.com](http://www.ampacseed.com)). Barabas and Barkant are forage turnips, Barnapoli is a forage rape and T-Raptor is a hybrid brassica all from Barenburg Seed ([www.Barusa.com](http://www.Barusa.com)). Dwarf Essex is an old commercial vegetable rape marketed by several companies. Purpletop and FL Broadleaf are sold for common household turnip or mustard greens throughout the southeast USA.

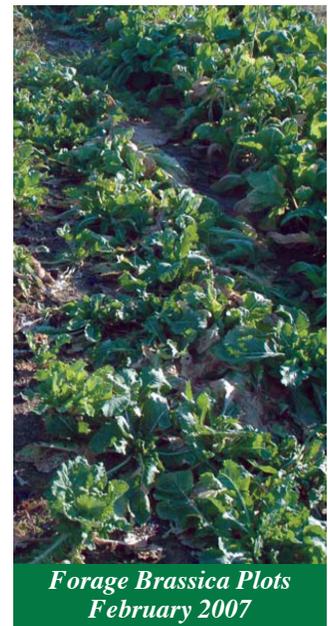
This study looked at just the top growth and does not include the turnip portion. Of these varieties T-Raptor was the highest yielding through March followed by Pasja and Dwarf Essex (which was still growing in April as this article was written). The commonly grown Purpletop turnip and mustard greens were lower in yield than the top producers but higher than a couple of the improved forage brassicas. Forage quality analyses will be conducted to determine crude protein and digestibility to compare any differences between varieties but all will likely be highly digestible (> 70%) and protein levels should be expected to be in the 16 to 24% range. Given its high forage quality and good mid-winter growth, forage brassicas should be considered as part of winter pastures in the southeast.

Table 1. Growth and Seasonal Distribution of Brassicas Grown at Mississippi State University, 2006-2007.

Brassica Variety	November 21	January 24	March 26	Total
	----- lbs per acre -----			
Appin	1571	2657	3928	8256
Barabas	1402	1746	1957	5105
Barkant	1241	1902	2434	5577
Barnapoli	812	2898	4257	7968
Bonar	924	2630	4222	7776
Florida Broadleaf	1512	2505	3473	7491
Pasja	1420	3661	5761	10842
Dwarf Essex	1232	3121	4855	9209
T-Raptor	1799	4112	6211	12123
Purpletop	2375	2201	3389	7965
Least significant Difference (LSD)	560	445	532	866



Forage Brassica Plots in February 2007



Forage Brassica Plots in February 2007

## New This Fall! Turf Perfect 10lb. Bags.

