

# The **Ampac**Impact

July 2004

A Quarterly News Publication

## Update From The Valley

March and April were warm and dry in the Willamette Valley causing concern among seed growers. However, since then the Willamette Valley has received sufficient moisture and most of the crops look good. The following is a crop evaluation by species.

### **Perennial Ryegrass**

Two months ago perennial ryegrass growers were concerned. Third year fields looked weak because of the stress they endured last summer and the newly fall seeded fields were thin and weak. Only the two-year-old fields looked like they would produce an average crop. Well, isn't it amazing what rain can do? The three-year-old fields have grown thicker and look like they should produce an average crop. This year most two-year-old fields look excellent. Lastly, the newly seeded fields look better than they did two months ago and should yield close to an average crop.



*"Nothing Runs Like A Deere"*

A couple of side notes for you on perennial ryegrass: Acres are up about 12-13% in the Willamette Valley with an increase in grower owned varieties. There has also been an increase of acres in Canada. Finally, because of the slow establishment and weak stands early on, there will be an increase in weed contamination.

### **Tall Fescue**

The tall fescue crop looks excellent for the most part. A comment from one tall fescue grower of 15 years was that he has never seen the seed heads so full and heavy. Last year's spring planted fields are weak and thin but all other stands look good. New tall fescue varieties are yielding more per acre than old varieties and more growers are using growth regulators too. The K-31 crop that looked excellent before harvest is now

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getting rained on. This has had an adverse effect on K-31 yields.

### **Fine Fescue**

Like the tall fescue spring planted fields, the fine fescue fields are either weak or had to be replanted. The rest of the crop looks good. Production acres of fine fescue are up in the Willamette Valley but will have very little effect on the market. The Canadian production of creeper is the most influential on the fine fescue market. Acres of production in Canada is at a 10-year low with low inventories.

### **Orchardgrass**

The orchardgrass yields are coming in less than average this harvest. However, look for the market to remain soft this upcoming year.

### **Annual Ryegrass**

Acres of annual ryegrass are up about 2% and carryover this spring is low. So far this year's crop looks to be average at best, if not a little off.

Look for the price on tetraploid annual ryegrass to remain firm and the common annual price to be higher than in years past.

## Dave's Corner

### **Attention Alfalfa with StandFast™ Technology Update**



Attention with StandFast™ technology had 25-28" regrowth in only 19 days in Clinton, WI.

In our July 2003 *Ampac Impact I* mentioned a field of Attention Alfalfa with StandFast™ technology from Kenny Bontrager's farm in Northern Indiana (Kenny is an Amish farmer in LaGrange Co. IN). At that time (June 24, 2003) Kenny was about ready to take his first cutting from his spring 2003 planted field. By the end of the season Kenny took three cuts in his seeding year! Kenny observed in the seeding year that his Attention had faster recovery and had better standability than other varieties planted on his farm.

I went to Kenny's again on June 3, 2004. Kenny was raking his field of Attention that was cut on June 1 and was nearly at full bloom stage. The weekend before he cut his Attention there were heavy thunderstorms with high winds (50+ mph) and 2+ inches of rain. The Attention was nearly waist high and as you can see, was harvested with a very clean cut. The only place where there was much residue was in a swail that ran through the field. The forage was dry,

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Attention with StandFast™ technology gave a clean cut for Kenny Bontrager

high quality, and not moldy because it was standing so well and off the ground.

In another field on Kenny's farm that was cut before the Attention there was a lot of residue left. It is a three year old stand of a competitor's variety that was harvested 6 days earlier than the Attention (on May 26).



A lot of tonnage was lost this spring in many fields including this field of a competitive variety at Kenny Bontrager's

As you can see from the photo, it did not stand nearly as well. I do not know how to measure how much forage was left in the field but I'd estimate that it had to be 30% or more. I also visited a neighbor's farm that had a different variety that was yet to be harvested. The bottom 20" of that stand was poor quality because it

was "laying flat" on the ground. The field had moldy, brown stems with the leaves fallen off and much of the stand was left in the field because it lodged so badly.

Even in a wet, windy, tough spring Attention Alfalfa provided "*More Harvestable Quality and Yield!*" This is just what we sold it to be: superior, even in tough times. Attention is Standing above the Competition!



Forage quality was very poor in many fields where the alfalfa was down

### ***Grassland's® Tekapo Orchardgrass is still "The Only" Grazing Orchardgrass***

Over the years *Grassland's® Tekapo Orchardgrass* has consistently stood apart from the competition in university grazing trials and more importantly, in producers fields. Until this past year our main problem was producing enough seed to supply the demand. But those days are in the past and we have a very good supply from NZ and Oregon production fields for this fall and next spring.

## Dave's Corner

But why the high demand for an expensive Orchardgrass? The answer is simple; Tekapo is unique when it comes to OG varieties. Tekapo was bred under grazing for grazing, there is nothing like it in the marketplace. But the improved grazing characteristic is not the only trait that makes Tekapo worth the extra “cost”. Tekapo is also unique in its growth habit. Tekapo tillers more than other varieties and its crown is at ground level, not in a big clump like hay-types. This trait is helpful in that the root system is much denser and the crown is less affected by close grazing than other varieties. The dense root system provides better drought tolerance. In dry years, producers tell us that Tekapo is the last cool-season forage still available to graze. Tekapo is also one of the most disease resistant OG varieties available. This trait is very evident in trials where you see several varieties side by side. While many other varieties are ridden by leaf rust and other leaf diseases; Tekapo is lush and has very little, if any leaf disease. When animals are grazing they prefer to eat non-diseased leaves, therefore Tekapo is one of the most palatable grasses a producer can plant! This characteristic also helps in hay production as producers can sell or feed higher quality forage. Another trait that is helpful for both the grazer and hay producer is that Tekapo has less seed heads than other OG varieties. Tekapo is a medium-late variety but many producers claim that they rarely see seed heads in their Tekapo fields. Now, we all know that it does produce seed heads; but, far fewer than the traditional hay-types do. That is the reason Tekapo is more “expensive”; it costs more to produce it. With the unique traits that Tekapo exhibits it really doesn't cost

more...it actually provides a greater benefit!

### **Feast II Tetraploid Short-Rotation Ryegrass**

Feast II Tetraploid Short-Rotation Ryegrass is an exciting new variety that Ampac Seed Company released from the Wrightson Seed, Ltd line-up in spring 2004. Feast II is a Tetraploid Ryegrass that is proving to be a high yielding, persistent, and palatable variety. When compared to competitive Italian-type ryegrasses we are finding improved forage yields, higher forage quality, and improved animal performance. In on-farm studies producers are reporting higher milk production, faster regrowth after grazing, and improved persistence to competitor's Italian-type ryegrass. Research done in NZ has scientifically shown Feast II to provide improved animal performance over varieties sold in NZ and in the US (research available upon request).

When compared to Westerwold Annual Ryegrasses Feast II provides a tremendous advantage, especially when spring planted. Spring planted Westerwold types generally head out during the autumn of the seeding year and will generally not return to vegetative growth. Many producers have observed that Feast II will not give many (if any) seed heads during seeding year. With good moisture and proper fertility Feast II will produce a flush of seed heads the second year and go back to vegetative growth for fall grazing. I have seen fields and university plots in late August where Westerwold varieties are headed out and brown where the Feast II is green, growing, and totally vegetative. We are calling Feast II a

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“short-rotation” ryegrass because in some transition areas we are seeing stands that are 3 years old.

Because of the performance of Feast II we have determined that we will no longer promote or sell Maverick Gold Hybrid Ryegrass. We are seeing better persistence, production, and less heading out in seeding year with Feast II. NZ research has shown Feast II to have improved animal production over Maverick Gold; and it costs less to you and the producer. Maverick Gold has wonderful agronomic traits but Feast II has similar positive characteristics and many more.

### **Ampac's Perfect Fit Forage Brassicas™**

Don't forget to sell **Appin Forage Turnips, Pasja Hybrid Brassica, and Bonar Forage Rape** (all from Wrightson Seeds in NZ) after wheat is harvested or corn silage is taken off, or after corn is harvested! We are having excellent success in the Midwest with the spring seedings and seedings with pearl millet and/or BMR sorghum-sudangrass. Both Appin and Pasja grow very vigorously and may be available to graze within 50 days of planting! Add 2 bushels of oats to 3-5# of Appin or Pasja and *get the fences ready* because you are going to have LOTS of feed for beef cattle, dairy cows, or sheep. Producers in many areas were able to graze even into January last year with Appin turnips. A photo of Pasja in pearl millet on a dairy farm in central Illinois planted in May 2004 shows how much growth you can get in a short time. Your customers will be amazed at the high quality forage produced with these

products. *Look for our Forage Brassica™ ads and insert in Graze Magazine and Stockman Grass Farmer in July and August editions!*

### **Etcetera...**

Can I mention turf for a minute? I know many people know me as “Pasture Dave” but I sell turf too! I am very excited about AMPAC's new turf varieties. Delaware XL PRg, Cochise III TTTF, and Expedition TTTF are available this fall and more products are coming soon (Phenom GLR PRg, Cortez II TTTF, etc...). Ampac is committed to providing the “best of the best” across our whole product line and the new turf and forage products are outstanding. Add these products along with the service provided by Aaron, Annette, Fred, Mike, Jeremy, Konrad, A.J., Sherry, and Marilee back in the office with Scott in PA and I think you'll see we are working hard to be your best supplier...with outstanding people and products

I hope to see most of you this summer and look forward to your “stories” on how you see our products performing. Enjoy your family vacations and let's get ready for an outstanding fall seeding time!

Dave

# Scott's Corner

## ...Delaware XL, out performing the competition!

**Delaware XL** is leading the way in the perennial ryegrass market. Bred out of the same program as Delaware Dwarf, **Delaware XL** exhibits new and improved characteristics to satisfy the increasingly high standards of the perennial ryegrass market. In performance trials conducted by Rutgers University, beginning in August 2001, **Delaware XL** has maintained a consistent high-ranking position. **Delaware XL** received a mean of 5.9 (LSD 0.7) in turf quality. Only two other named varieties ranked higher (rating 6.0 and 6.3, respectfully). Quality ratings are not based on color alone, but on a combination of color, density, uniformity, texture, and disease and environmental stress.

Variety	2002 Turf Quality
<b>Delaware XL</b>	5.9
Applaud	5.7
Pizzazz	5.0
Palmer III	4.1

*\* Data taken from Rutgers Proceedings 2002*

**Delaware XL** is a fine textured turf-type perennial ryegrass that has excellent color and disease resistance. This variety also shows improved Gray Leaf Spot resistance, which has been a focus of the professional turfgrass community. Blended with Ampac's other high quality perennial ryegrasses, or in a mono-stand, the Turfgrass Professional will have confidence in knowing his turf

will have excellent color, vigor, disease resistance and quality.

**Delaware XL** will be available fall 2004 in limited quantities. Put your trust in this new and improved variety and enjoy having **Delaware XL** in your turfgrass line up!!