

The AmpacImpact

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Today's Outlook

By Randy Waldie

Everyone knows that weather plays a major role in our lives.... especially those of us that depend on agriculture for our livelihood. We constantly keep a close eye on the current weather.... and then we talk endlessly about past and future weather patterns and how beneficial or detrimental the weather has been or will be to our business. Most of you are well aware of the weather the Willamette Valley experienced this last year. I would like to take this opportunity to explain its impact on the movement, or lack there of, of seed, what impact that had on existing inventories at the time and its impact on the market.

While this short crop has caused prices to increase, one of the more unfortunate aspect of this is the increase in price has not been significant enough to compensate the farmer for what he lost in seed yield. As you know weather problems have not been limited to Oregon. Many parts of the country have been very wet from spring right through summer. This has reduced the volume of seed shipped from Oregon to the mid-west, mid-Atlantic and northeastern sections. So with this lack of volume you would think that there would be adequate inventories and that the reduction in seed harvested should not



Wheat in the Willamette Valley, summer of 2003

have had such a dramatic influence on pricing. However there is one other ingredient that we must consider and that is production acres. Over the last couple of years most Oregon seed companies have attempted to bring their proprietary production more in line with current demand and expected market growth. Which has resulted in less acres of production. Consequently going into harvest 2003 there weren't large inventories of 2002 crop, even with less than expected spring movement. So that coupled with the very poor harvest has resulted in the strong prices we see today. My guess is that these prices will remain fairly stable till at least late spring 2004. The exception may be perennial ryegrass, which could remain extremely strong until fall of 2004.

Rutgers Field Days 2003

Have you ever wondered how much darker turf-type perennial ryegrass can get? Then take a look at Delaware XL. Dave and I had the chance to see Delaware XL in a trial with the current top performing PRg varieties, and we are excited! Delaware XL is darker, finer,

and has improved Gray Leaf resistance over today's top varieties. After seeing Delaware XL in New Jersey and in Oregon we are anxiously waiting to add it to our turf lineup. If your customers are asking for the best of the best, Delaware XL & Amazing will fill that need. Delaware XL will be available fall of 2004.

Delaware XL isn't the only new PRg on the way from AMPAC. We are looking at a few other experimental varieties and for now just have to say we are pleased with what we saw.

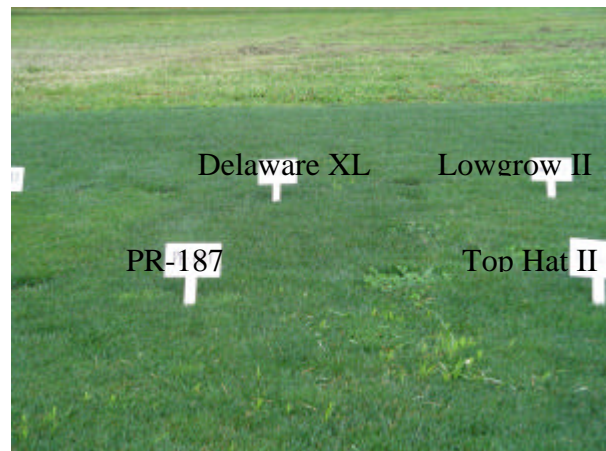


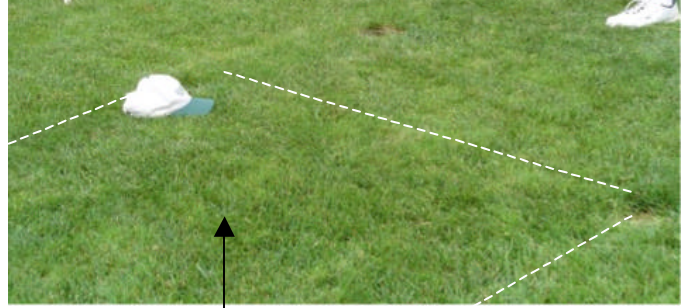
Photo taken at Adelphia, NJ, July 2003

One of the main reasons for the trip to New Jersey was to look at turf-type tall fescues. Cochise III looked as remarkable as its NTEP scores.

We also looked at what will be called Ninja 2 and Cortez II. Both Ninja 2 and Cortez II were developed from selections out of the south. By using selections from plants out of Georgia and Arkansas, Ninja 2 and Cortez II have been tested to be more heat and drought tolerant. In South Jersey, Ninja 2 and Cortez II showed superior Brown Patch resistances compared to the leading varieties. In the 2002 NTEP trial both varieties end up near the top at Fayetteville, AR. for Brown Patch resistance.

A three-way mix of Cochise III, Ninja 2, and Cortez II will perform extremely well for our customers in the Transition Zone. The excellent turf quality of Cochise III combined with the heat/drought tolerance Ninja 2 and Cortez II will make them a perfect choice for the Transition Zone. Add in outstanding Brown Patch resistance and we will have a dark, fine bladed, persistent tall fescue mix.

For those of you farther north where Brown Patch is not as extreme, we have a new Turf-Type Tall Fescue called Expedition. Expedition was bred using



Expedition at Adelphia, NJ., July 2003

selections out of top performing NTEP material. It rates similar to Cochise III for overall turf quality and color at the Rutgers trials. The combination of Cochise III, Expedition, and either Ninja 2 or Cortez II, will create an extremely dark and fine bladed tall fescue mix. Cochise III will be available in large quantities fall of 2004 along with limited quantities of Ninja 2. Expedition and Cortez II will be available the following year.

Article written by Aaron Kuenzi

Oasis Brand Forage Chicory

Richard H Watson
Agronomist.

Introducing Oasis Brand Forage Chicory.

As part of Ampac's continuing efforts to provide the very best in forage products,

we are happy to introduce Oasis Forage Chicory as the newest member of our specialist high quality forage crop line. Chicory has great potential as a high feed quality perennial forage herb. Commonly people think of chicory as the weed that grows on the side of roads, or is something that Southerners put in tea. While forage chicory is the same species, extensive selection has produced a plant that looks more like a lettuce and is very attractive to grazing animals. Oasis is the latest development in these forage chicories with traits that greatly improve the potential of this valuable species as a feed for livestock.



High Quality growth of Oasis Brand Forage Chicory

Chicory As A valuable part of Livestock Production.

I believe chicory to be one of the most underestimated forage crops in the USA. Like the brassicas (chicory is not a brassica), chicory is capable of providing very high quality, low cost feed at times when traditional grass and clover-based pastures may be unproductive. Chicory is a summer-active species that is extremely drought tolerant due to its extensive tap root (see photo below). Chicory is widely used in New Zealand and Australia as a specialist crop to provide high quality summer grazing for dairy cows, and for finishing beef cattle and lambs. For livestock producers in the USA who want to take advantage of using forages as a low cost way of feeding animals while maintaining high levels of production, Oasis forage chicory offers a great opportunity.

Young chicory plant showing development of large Tap Root

Some Important Attributes of Forage Chicory:

- *Very drought tolerant and summer active.*
- *Very high energy content.*

- *Very Digestible.*



- *Highly palatable to all classes of livestock.*

Why Use Oasis Brand Forage Chicory?

Those of you familiar with chicory will know there are a couple of improved varieties available that are specifically bred for use in forage production. Oasis is the latest development in forage chicories. Oasis Chicory was bred for improved resistance to diseases such as sclerotinia. Disease is the major limiting factor for persistence in chicory stands, so this extra protection against disease significantly increases survival of this valuable forage crop. Oasis also has a longer growing season, which allows it to produce more forage during the growing season, co-exist longer with other forage species, and compete with

invasive weed species. This improvement allows it to be more persistent both as a pure crop and as a component of a pasture mix.

Management Tips For Oasis Forage Chicory

While chicory (especially Oasis) can be incorporated successfully as a high quality component of a pasture mix, better performance and persistence can be achieved by using as an intensively managed specialist crop. The crop should be strip grazed at 10-12" height, leaving a residual of 4-6" for regrowth. Oasis is very compatible with white clover, red clover, and alfalfa, and it is recommended that one or a mix of these species be sown with the chicory. A short rotation ryegrass such as Feast II Italian ryegrass could also be added as a valuable component of the crop. Chicory can be sown in the spring or fall and will survive 5-6 years under careful management. Ampac will be coming out with a brochure and Tech sheet on the use, establishment, and management of Oasis forage chicory.

