The AMPAC Impact

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In & Around AMPAC

By Aaron Kuenzi

A look back on 2006

A friend and seedsman once asked me why I chose to become involved in the seed industry after graduating from college. As another year has come to an end I'm reminded of all the reasons why. What other industry can your fiercest competitor also be a great friend or somebody's "word" still stand for something? As years go by and new acquaintances are made and current relationships continue to develop, I realize how fortunate I am to work in the industry I do. I wish each one of you a prosperous and healthy 2007 and I look forward to working with you again this year.

Crop report-

Rain makes things green and Oregon just experienced one of its wettest Novembers ever, so most new fall plantings look good at this point. On the other hand, some spring planted fine fescue and tall fescue fields do not. While November was one of the wettest on record, September and October were relatively dry, thinning out the spring planted fields. Whether it's because of a dry September and October or new perennial ryegrass genetics, the third year fields once again are slow in "greening-up". While the percentages are not as high as last year, there are already perennial ryegrass fields being sprayed and plowed out. The marginal looking fields will be planted to the "new gold"... wheat. Here is a quick look at the increase or decrease of production acres that have passed certification as of October 2006 in Oregon.

Crop	Totals for 2006		Totals for 2005		% Change	
	Fields	Acres	Fields	Acres	Fields	Acres
Annual Ryegrass	58	2,617	67	2,670	-13.43%	-1.99%
Chewings Fescue	179	6,940	131	5,159	36.64%	34.52%
Hard Fescue	48	1,383	34	956	41.18%	44.67%
Intermediate Ryegrass	17	726	34	1,225	-50.00%	-40.73%
Kentucky Bluegrass	369	14,680	387	16,038	-4.65%	-8.47%
Orchardgrass	196	7,209	231	8,549	-15.15%	-15.67%
Perennial Ryegrass	1,810	72,433	2,036	82,571	-11.10%	-12.28%
Red Fescue	119	4,940	158	6,429	-24.68%	-23.16%
Tall Fescue	2,312	100,329	2,253	97,565	2.62%	2.83%

Sun on Mt. Hood

For more complete information visit: www.oscs.orst.edu/publications/specialreports/currentactivitysummary.pdf

As you can see from this information, most of the grass production is down. These numbers are only certified production but they do give use the best look at total grass production in Oregon as there is generally a correlation between uncertified and certified acres. In the last newsletter we talked about supply and demand and how that affects the price. A quick look back in history and we see that in 2001 there were 10,475 certified acres of orchardgrass supplying the market. That is a difference of 3,266 certified acres compared to today or about 2.8 million pounds of certified orchardgrass seed. Choke has been the main reason for the decline in these acres. Choke, a disease found mainly in orchardgrass, can reduce seed yields in excess of 30%.

Market update

Today most markets are historically high. What goes up must come down so its believed that over the next few years we should see a downward trend in most markets. Of course, a lot can happen over the next few years that may affect this trend, but as we sit here today most markets should start softening by September or October of 2007. Will we ever see 55/cwt Potomac or 40/cwt Perennial ryegrass again?... I don't think so, at least not coming from Oregon. Input costs, like everywhere else, have gone up too much. That and the fact that farm ground is reportedly selling between $8,000 and $17,000 per acre (This is true farm land, not land available for development or near cities).

Do however keep a watch on the Kentucky Bluegrass market. Reports indicate that there are fewer acres in production in WA. OR. and Id. I know most companies were not able to place the amount of acres they had hoped to. What is the reason for this? Two reasons for sure: not being able to burn the bluegrass straw/stubble and the "new gold" wheat. Not being able to burn the straw/stubble reduces yields and makes for low quality production and at $5/bushel wheat these farmers will grow wheat over bluegrass any day.

Speaking of not being able to burn your straw or stubble, a bill that would ban all open field burning in Oregon has a very real chance to make it to the legislative floor. If the bill reaches the floor and passes, the impact on the seed industry would be drastic. The most notable impact would be a great reduction in chewings and red fescue production. Neither one of those crops are sustainable without open field burning. If this bill passes, my guess is there will not be any production of chewings or red fescue in Oregon.

I would like to first start out by wishing a Happy New Year and belated Merry Christmas! I hope that all of you enjoyed the time with family and friends! Secondly, I would like to thank all of you for a successful 2006, and I look forward to continuing our success in 2007! How are we going to do that? By providing you with exceptional varieties, outstanding customer service, and technical support!!

So...What's in the future for new varieties? Well, let's talk turf to start! AMPAC Seed is a progressive company striving to continue to provide exceptional genetics by working with numerous breeders for the latest advantages and trends in the market place. We at AMPAC spent many hours and even more miles traveling across the country to select varieties this year to be entered into the NTEP's. Here are a few high lights of what the future holds: Perennial Ryegrass trends seem to be focused on darker color and Gray Leaf Spot Resistance. AMPAC has three new varieties that we are proud to introduce. **Phenom**, which is a Gray Leaf Spot Resistant (GLR) variety that was selected out of the top 10 varieties at Rutgers in 2004 has great color and high GLR and in the 2005 NTEP disease rating **Phenom** scored 8.5 out of 9 with an LSD of 1.1! That essentially puts it in the class of "Above and Beyond" for performance! **Phenom** became available in the Fall of 2006 and is in good supply for 2007. AMPAC has made selections out of the Amazing genetics to introduce an improved variety named **Amazing GS**. **Amazing GS** continues the tradition of excellences originally started with Amazing. **Amazing GS** is a Gray Leaf Spot Resistant variety that is showing exceptional Turf Quality and consistently placing in top 10 named varieties in the 2005 data reported by 2004 NTEP. A few examples of where **Amazing GS** placed with in the top 10 are: Turf Quality in the Northeast Region, Gray Leaf Spot Resistance at Adelphia, NJ, and Turf Quality in Schedule "B" that is medium maintenance and athletic field situations. **Amazing GS** will be available in the Fall of 2007 with an expected good supply! The last variety to introduce is a selection out of Pleasure XL genetics called **Pleasure Supreme**. **Pleasure Supreme** exhibits dark color and good disease resistance. **Pleasure Supreme** has a high traffic tolerance as reported in the 2005 NTEP data out of Ithaca, NY. **Pleasure Supreme** also placed consistently high in the 2005 NTEP data for Turf Quality, Genetic Color, and Summer Density. **Pleasure Supreme** will be available in limited quantities for the Fall of 2007. For more detailed information visit www.ntep.org

AMPAC seed has made some initial selection in the fescue market. Trends in turf type tall fescue point towards increased Brown Patch Resistance (BPR), finer leaf blades, dark color, and more aggressive tillering. Our future genetics will be focused on the trends mentioned and look for updates as the year goes on. A new round of fine fescue will be available in 2009 and we have selected genetics that will have darker color, better drought tolerance, and improved disease resistance. Look for updates on these exciting varieties as the year goes on.

A short update on Wildlife Perfect: AMPAC's Wildlife Perfect food plot mixtures have held their own in research trials at Michigan State University by out performing the leading competition. Look for that information in the Spring Impact. Also, Wildlife Perfect will be featured on an outdoors show called Just Killin' Time that starts airing in January on the Sportsman's Channel (Sunday 8:30 pm, Wednesday 3:30 pm, and Friday 1:30 pm). Just Killin' Time has food plots from North Carolina through Virginia and into Pennsylvania. They will be show casing our mixtures and discussing the benefits over other seed mixtures.

As you can see, we at AMPAC are very busy securing new genetics, which will help increase your market share in turf, forage, and now WILDLIFE! I hope that you all have a very profitable New Year and I look forward to seeing you all soon. *Scott*

Happy New Year to all of you! 2007 looks to be very interesting for forage production in the USA. With the ethanol "craze" overtaking most of agriculture many changes to the landscape look to be obvious. The first change I believe we will see is more corn...corn, corn, corn. Smaller farmers in Iowa are renting their farms out to the highest bidder; and the highest I've heard so far is $275/acre...and it is a 5-year contract!!! What is that larger farmer going to plant? C-O-R-N.

On the other side of the coin we have beef and dairy producers needing forages. Beef prices remain pretty strong but feeding corn does not look economical. Dairy farms can hardly afford to feed high priced grains and silage for low profit milk. So what is the answer? B-A-L-A-N-C-E is what I am preaching! Might this be an opportunity to make some extra in the grain market? Yes! But, let's not forget what has made very good money the past few years...beef and forages...and milk too. Let's keep our eyes open for forages that will provide extra animal production and/or extend the grazing season (higher quality alfalfa like Radiant-AM, Perfect Fit™ Forage brassicas, Pro-Max ...see attached article, and so on.) And, let's see if we can produce forages for our neighbors operation as well. If dairy quality hay is $150/ton and you can raise 6-8 tons/acre then that equals $900-1,200/acre gross profit! 200 bu/acre corn @ $3.50/bu gives a $700/acre gross profit...Obviously; many producers don't get 6-8 tons/acre of dairy quality hay, but maybe if we wet wrap the hay and make baleage...or sell haylage...catch my drift? Keep your forage options open. There will probably be people looking for forages...maybe even your next door neighbor!

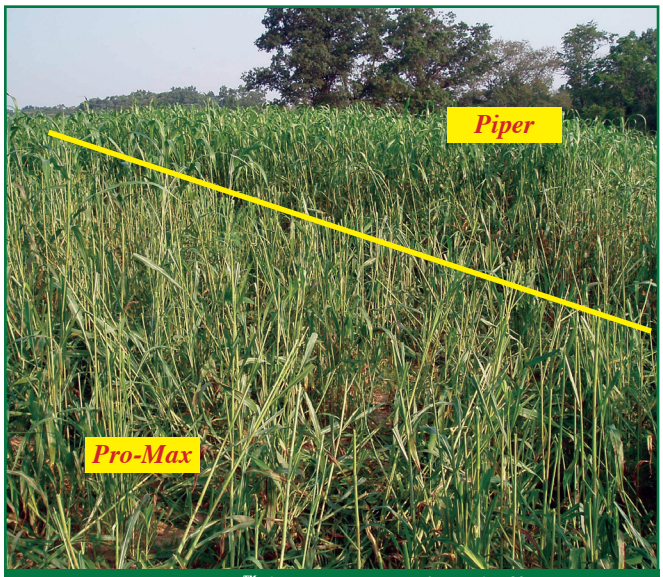
Pro-Max™ and Pro-Max Plus™

Ampac Seed Company is proud to announce the addition of Pro-Max™ and Pro-Max Plus™ to our forage product line-up! Pro-Max™ is the first BMR Hybrid Sudangrass to hit the market. Pro-Max Plus™ has Pasja Hybrid Brassica added in for additional grazing profitability and quality! What is so exciting about Pro-Max™? Pro-Max™ allows the dairy, beef, sheep, and goat producer to have a summer annual grass that can be grazed and baled for hay. Pro-Max™ will also provide a top quality, highly palatability grass with improved digestibility over other summer annual grasses. Studies done in California showed that by grazing Pro-Max™ a 20% gain in animal production was achieved versus grazing a non-BMR sudangrasses. That is very exciting! But, how does it compare to the popular BMR Sorghum-Sudangrasses?
The chart helps explain the benefits of Pro-Max™. As you can see, Pro-Max™ ranks as the best for baled hay, while adding Pasja makes Pro-Max Plus™ tops for grazing, and palatability, while placing second in the silage category. The BMR trait bred into Pro-Max™ makes it more palatable and has increased the plant forage quality. The only advantage we can see to BMR Sorghum-Sudangrass will be silage

Variety	Baled Hay	Grazing	Silage	Palatability
Pro-Max™ (Pro-Max Plus™)	√√√ (-)	√√√ (√√√)	√√ (√√√)	√√√ (√√√)
BMR Sorghum-Sudangrass	√	√	√√√	√√
Non-BMR Sudangrass	√√	√√	√	√

yield! Baling for hay, grazing, and forage quality/palatability all lean heavily towards Pro-Max™ and Pro-Max Plus™. We recommend NOT using Pro-Max Plus™ for baled hay. Neither Pro-Max™ nor Pro-Max Plus™ can be used for horses.

In addition to improved palatability and digestibility Pro-Max™ has exhibited improved levels of crude protein (18.53% CP on Pro-Max™ vs 16.83% CP on Piper) and improved levels of TDN (65.48% TDN on Pro-Max™ vs 64.65% TDN on Piper).



Pro-Max™ leaves were stripped off while Piper plants were ignored!

The photo shows how Pro-Max™ was grazed before the non-BMR sudangrasses. This is exciting; but also points out that producers must be made aware that animals will eat Pro- Max™ "into the ground" before they eat non- BMR sudangrasses and even BMR sorghumsudangrasses as evidenced in grazing plots in Illinois.

Seeding rates should be 25-35#/acre and soil temperatures need to be at least 60°F for best germination and seedling vigor. Grazing can start at 36-40" tall and leave 6-8" of stubble for best regrowth. Both products will have similar management for nitrate and prussic acid as other sudangrasses.

During 2005 and 2006 Ampac has tested Pro-Max™ and or Pro-Max Plus™ in multiple locations and under multiple management types. We have tested in 2 Wisconsin (1 grazing one silage), 2 Illinois (grazing cattle on one and sheep on another), and 2 Kentucky (1 silage, 1 grazing) locations plus major work in Mississippi at Mississippi State University looking at animal production advantages for Pro- Max™.

Supply on Pro-Max™ looks to be good for spring/summer of 2007. However, we are anticipating very good movement so orders should come as early as possible to assure ontime shipment and that product is available.

Pro-Max™ contains the Hy-gest™ BMR trait.

Old pastures can cost the producer money!

By Jeff Medlin

Here is a typical "pasture scenario" that I have witnessed time and time again. Farmer Joe has a "pasture" that is more then 10 years old and seems to produce some green forage. It just doesn't seem to holding up to grazing conditions or produce forage for very long. It is critical to note that pastures do decline in their effectiveness over time, and it is a process that can be avoided. So the question continues to come up, "How can we make our pastures better?" followed by the question "Is it worth it?" Yes, but only if you want to make more money. Pasture renovation can be defined as a process to improve species composition and extend the productive life of pastures.

The first step in recommending pasture renovations is to take a complete soil sample in order to analyze what you've got to work with. I like to think of good soil test results as my roadmap for the trip I am planning. My father once told me that if you don't care where you're going, it doesn't matter which way you go. On this trip, I want to make sure and optimize my existing pastures, without spending every dime to do it! Without proper soil tests, all we are doing is guessing (at best), and probably not providing the proper fertility requirements for the crop we are about to grow. So, let's live by this motto: "Don't guess, soil test!"

Inter-seeding and no-till pasture renovations have doubled and tripled the production of low yield-

ing pastures. While we understand the importance of adding soil amendments to improve forage production, we also should consider introducing new species and varieties to our pasture conditions to improve productivity and quality to our grazing systems. Improved varieties of legumes and grasses like Kopu II, Starfire, Quartet PRg, and Feast II have been University tested to show significant benefits compared to many "old" legumes and grasses. Starfire red clover and Kopu II white clover have been shown to not only offset some of the nitrogen requirements of pasture, but also help improve forage quality, digestibility, and palatability to grazing systems. This means as a producer you save money on your fertilizer bill and your animals will be more productive. Quartet and Feast II ryegrass both are "low aftermath seed heading" varieties. This means that when at maturity instead of continuously trying to produce seed heads (like most other forage grasses) Quartet and Feast II will return to vegetative forage production after one flush of seed heads. What does all of this mean to the producer? Quartet and Feast II will produce high quality forages longer then most other forage grasses resulting in better animal performance.

Sometimes existing pasture situations are so poor, the best recommendation is for a complete renovation of the site. This process will include tillage or the use of herbicides to eliminate existing vegetation, adding soil amendments (fertilizer and lime), and reseeding. Complete renovation will also allow for improvements in soil conditioning such as irrigation or soil drainage improvements if needed.

An idea that is gaining in popularity is the use of a "break crop" before establishing a totally new pasture. One such type of "break crop" is using an annual such as Perfect Fit™ Forage Brassicas. Most producers do not want to have any "down" time between taking out their old pasture and establishing a new one. Perfect Fit™ Forage Brassicas offer an excellent forage source, in a relatively quick amount of time. By no-till drilling or by broadcasting on to a lightly disked pasture ground you can establish a productive, high quality forage source in 50-60 days (depending on climatic conditions and fertility kevels). Perfect Fit™ Forage Brassicas will allow for the opportunity to "break" the current cycle of available forages, and allow for the reintroduction for improved varieties in the upcoming season. For example, a producer in the Midwest could spray out his old pasture in May. Then no-till Pasja Forage Brassica into it and have a forage source in 40-60 days until mid August. In mid August the producer would once again spray the pasture with a non-selective herbicide. Following a "good kill" the producer would seed the pasture to a Pasture Perfect® seed mixture for a productive permanent pasture.

Benefits of renovating pastures include:

- Greater Return on Investment (yes, pasture land is an investment!)
- Improved Animal Performance and Productivity
- Improved Feed Quality
- Improve Pasture Growth throughout the year to help regulate growth curves
- Introduction of Improved Pasture Genetics
- Removal of undesirable traits (weeds, endophyte infected species)
- Improve soil drainage and aeration

As you prepare to renovate pasture conditions, choosing what to reseed is always part of the equation. Check with local seed dealer or university extension agent to determine which Pasture Perfect® seed mixture is right for your particular growing conditions.

As a producer, be patient and use good management practices to help new forage seedlings become established. Avoid close grazing of newly

emerged seedlings. Maintain fertility levels, and schedule routine rest periods between grazings. Weed control is critical, but beware of broad leaf herbicides when clovers and other broad leaf desirable species are present.

Start with a plan, not just an idea, but a written plan. Write it down and refer to it often. Keep good records and take pictures. If you are like me, it's hard to remember how things looked before changes were made, and it's good to look back and see the progress you've made. Remember, like an artist, when you first start renovating your pasture, it is a work in progress! Go to www.pastureperfect.com or www.ampacseed.com for more detailed information and remember, a poor pasture may be costing you money!!!