

# The AMPAC Impact

July 2005

A Quarterly News Publication



A BIG thank you to all of AMPAC's customers that have helped make the spring season of 2005 a successful one! AMPAC has faced multiple challenges over the last few years but with your help we have been able to overcome each one of them. We realize that our continued success can only come from the successes of our customers. AMPAC is striving to bring you better products (like Radiant AM alfalfa), increased services and reliable inventories, along with much more in order that each customer is successful. Once again, a very sincere thank you to each one of our customers. It's the relationships that we have with you that makes this a great industry to be a part of. Again, thank you to everyone and we look forward to working with each of you this fall season.

Untimely rains, late frosts and drought are all reminders of how much our business is influenced by the weather. Oregon's mild winter followed by a wet spring is affecting supply, while being too dry or too wet in certain market regions affected the demand this spring.



*The brown section shows vole damaged annual ryegrass.*



*Scott & Dave looking for voles in a damaged section of a field (the grass should be green.)*

Our mild winter produced a tremendous Vole (Gray Tailed) population. These voles have damaged numerous acres of annual ryegrass, fawn fescue and now are working on some perennial ryegrass fields. According to the Oregon State Extension Service, voles climb the stock of the grass plant and clip the seed heads off to feed on them. With harvest underway in Oregon's Willamette Valley, yields of some species will be affected. Here is what to expect:



*The vole can get 5-6" long.*

## **Annual Ryegrass**

Shorter than normal crop even with an increase in acres due to voles and the wet spring. We have heard rumors that prices could get as high as 32/cwt for Gulf.

## **Orchardgrass**

Expect lower yields on fewer acres to strengthen this market. Over the last few years, Valley producers have seen an increase in uncontrollable diseases such as Choke and are taking out old fields of orchardgrass. A poor harvest combined with low inventories should push the price up.

## Tall Fescue

According to a chemical company representative, the “Fawn Fescue” fields have been hurt worse by the voles than the “annual ryegrass”. This along with low inventories and a very poor Kentucky 31 harvest have pushed prices up. At this point the turf type fescues look good and an excellent harvest is expected.

## Fine Fescue

A good crop in Canada & Oregon with extra inventories should keep the common creeper price soft. Extremely low inventories and acres of chewings and hard fescue will keep the prices of these two items strong. Current acreage of chewing and hard fescue is about 50% of normal.

## Perennial Ryegrass

With an increase in acres and ample rainfall, we are expecting a good crop of perennial ryegrass. However we have had reports of vole damage to some perennial ryegrass fields in the South Valley. The market price of perennial ryegrass is still up in the air as the PRBA (Perennial Ryegrass Bargaining Association) and seed companies have yet to establish a price.

## Other Crops

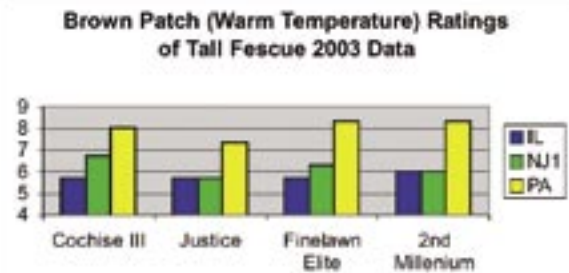
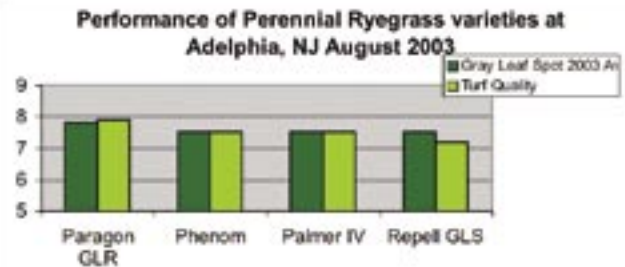
Kentucky Bluegrass harvest is just getting started and the market is soft. Clover acres are up and the crop looks good. Alfalfa inventories are low and acres for new plantings were hard to get. Expect the market on proprietary varieties to be firm.

For more up to date information contact your AMPAC sales representative.



Mother Nature has dealt the cards and we are experiencing a wide array of cards across the country! Here in the East we have experienced a very dry spring with cool temperatures. The New England area set records for low temperatures and lack of rain, only receiving 25% of normal spring rains. Just a few short days ago, summer officially began and the cards are no different. Here in Pennsylvania we have not had rain for about three weeks and we are experiencing the triple “H’s”, Heat-Humid-High Temperatures! Though some may

say that the weather pattern is great for business and seed sales will be great for fall, we also need to keep in mind our friends that are using our seeds and the financial impact that they may incur in lack of crop production or quality of turf stand. This brings me to the point of why to select improved varieties and offer the benefit to our customers.



We at AMPAC Seed Company work with numerous breeders across the country and even internationally to select species and varieties to perform well in a multitude of climates and situations. Both university and private breeders continue to improve their genetics to help us in combating disease, drought tolerance, insect resistance, spreading capabilities, color, and density. In the remainder of this article, I will outline a few of our varieties as well as what AMPAC is looking for in future varieties.

The most recent Perennial Ryegrass breeding is focused on Gray Leaf Spot Resistance. Future genetics will provide Rust Resistance, Dollar Spot Resistance, and better drought tolerance. Below you will find information on our top performing variety **PHENOM!**

**PHENOM** Perennial Ryegrass is topping the charts for Gray Leaf Spot Resistance in the Performance Trials at Rutgers University. **PHENOM** ranked 7.5 out of 9, with the top named performer-ranking 7.8 (LSD 1.2). **PHENOM** also is ranked second in the trials for Turf Quality. **PHENOM** exhibits extremely dark green color and density. **PHENOM** will be available fall 2006.

Future Turf Type Tall Fescue genetics can be grouped into three basic categories: Improved Disease Resistance; Broad Based; and Rhizomatous. Improved resistance to disease, such as Brown Patch, is always one of the top criteria in genetic selections. Broad based varieties will have a spreading trait that will increase the “foot print” of each plant to help create a full stand of turf in a shorter period of time. Also, in this type breeders are working on disease resistance. Rhizomonous types are starting to be the hype in the market, but in all reality, the varieties tend to be low in Turf Quality and have minimal rhizomonous activity. Rhizomonous varieties have a place in the industry if blended with other types to mask the less than average turf quality. Future genetics will produce high turf quality and improved rhizomonous activity. AMPAC Seed Company is currently looking at the Broad Based types with improved disease resistance to Brown Patch. Below you will find information on our Current Varieties that are available and future varieties that will be available soon.

**COCHISE III** Turf Type Tall Fescue is the Chief among the tribe of tall fescues! **COCHISE III** remains at the top of Turf Quality ratings in the 2003 Progress report released by NTEP. **COCHISE III** has high rankings in all NTEP region reports in Turf Quality: #1 named variety in the Mid Atlantic and Transition Zoned; #3 in the Mid West; and #4 in the Semi Arid Zone and North East. **COCHISE III** exhibits excellent Brown Patch Resistance ranking it #4 in the nation.



*Rhizome characteristics of Expedition.*

**EXPEDITION** Turf Type Tall Fescue is a well-refined variety that will make an excellent turf stand in rugged, hard to grow conditions up to the high maintenance lawns and sports fields. **EXPEDITION** has the highest rankings from the NTEP 2003 “Turf Quality Under

Traffic Stress Progress Report” taken from 3 locations and out performs other “Rhizomonous” varieties in the NTEP. **EXPEDITION** also exhibits improved drought tolerance and disease resistance, dark green color, and high endophyte. As you can see in the picture, **EXPEDITION** has spreading capabilities to help knit the turf stand for better traffic tolerance and reduced erosion.

**NINJA II** Turf Type Tall Fescue pulls away from the pack to become one of the best varieties for high traffic areas. **NINJA II** ranks very high in research trials conducted both by NTEP and Rutgers University in Low Mow Traffic Tolerant conditions. **NINJA II** has the second highest rankings from the NTEP 2003 “Turf Quality Under Traffic Stress Progress Report” taken from 3 locations only to be out shadowed by **EXPEDITION**. **NINJA II** will have a narrower leaf texture and a dense stand of turf, which will make it an excellent choice for sports fields and other high traffic areas that require lower mowing heights.

**Turfgrass Performance Data 2003 NTEP Progress Reports**  
**Turf Quality Mean Ratings**

Variety	Traffic Stress	Brown Patch	Summer Density	Turf Quality
Ninja II	5.2	6.4	7.5	5.9
Falson IV	4.5	4.3	7.3	6.7
Titan L.M.	4.5	5.5	7.3	5.6
Hotel Grand	4.5	5.5	7.1	5.5
LSP	6.6	6.7	6.7	6.2

**CORTEZ II** Turf Type Tall Fescue remains a warrior in performance trials in the heat of battle! **CORTEZ II** has the highest ranking from Advanta Seed Research conducted in Fayetteville, NC trials for Turf Quality with a ranking of 6.4 out 9 (lowest 4.9, LSD .68). **CORTEZ II** also performed well in trials conducted in Albany, Oregon by Advanta with a Turf Quality rating of 6.4 (highest 7.3, lowest 5.2, LSD 0.26) and Winter Color of 6.67, which was the highest ranking. Performance Trials at Rutgers University reported in 2003 that **CORTEZ II** had a Turf Quality Average ranking of 5.5 out of 9 (highest 6.6, lowest 1.0, LSD 0.5) which translates into being in the top 15% of all varieties reported. **CORTEZ II** will be available in limited supplies for fall 2005.

You can rely on AMPAC Seed Company to continue to provide outstanding genetics by working with top breeders across the globe. At AMPAC we stand behind our motto of “Integrity and Excellence... our Foundation and Your Guarantee”.



Greetings from the sweltering and dry Midwest! This spring and early summer remind me of previous years where rainfall was spotty and crops were not very good. This is a year where planting pastures with more drought/heat tolerant species sure look better than those that are heavy with ryegrass. A friend told me last week that their perennial ryegrass has been “brown and brittle” for “weeks”. I know that many dairy producers are tempted to utilize a lot of perennial ryegrass because they are very productive when the conditions are right. Unfortunately, when conditions are not “right”, the grass is not very productive. This is another year where Tekapo Orchardgrass, Bronson Tall Fescue, Duo Festulolium, and StarFire Red Clover prove their “added value” in mixes. Speaking of added value...

**Ampac Seed Company is introducing two new products!**



**Radiant-AM** alfalfa is the newest addition to Ampac’s alfalfa line-up! Radiant-AM’s name means “Radiant-Aggressive Management” alfalfa. Radiant-AM alfalfa is a dark green, dense alfalfa variety that was bred for maximum production with top yields, improved persistence and outstanding forage quality. Radiant-AM delivers faster recovery after harvest than nearly all conventional alfalfa varieties and provides added yield for the cash hay producer or dairy farmer. Radiant-AM shows a tremendous yield advantage when harvesting four or five times per year versus three times per year. Research also shows that Radiant-AM gives improved animal performance when managed aggressively. For example, Radiant-AM shows a 60% increase in milk production when cut four times at mid-bud to early flower compared to three cuts at late bloom. Radi-

ant-AM responds best when utilizing improved alfalfa management. Radiant-AM is at the “top of the pack” when comparing it to products on the market today! Be sure to ask Aaron, Scott, or myself about performance in your region! Tech sheets and further details will be on the web soon!

We have limited supply of Radiant-AM for fall 2005 and good supply for spring 2006!



**Pasture Perfect**® Soil Builder Brand annual ryegrass is designed for the row crop producer or livestock farmer that wants to sow annual ryegrass after corn or soybeans. Pasture Perfect® Soil Builder Brand annual ryegrass will contain varieties of annual ryegrass that show improved winterhardiness in the Midwest and that are quick to establish. Studies in the Midwest by the Oregon Ryegrass Commission show the tremendous benefits to utilizing annual ryegrass as a soil builder. Not only will erosion be reduced but the roots of the ryegrass will improve soil tilth and percolation. One note that needs to be addressed when using annual ryegrass! Whoever is using annual ryegrass for this purpose needs to be sure to kill the ryegrass in the spring before it heads out. It is vital to keep the plants from becoming mature. Spraying out or plowing under the annual ryegrass when it is 5-8" tall in the spring should be a good sound practice. View [http://ryegrass.com/Ryegrass\\_1117.pdf](http://ryegrass.com/Ryegrass_1117.pdf) for more information on the Hidden benefits of annual ryegrass for cover crops and look at <http://www.agnr.umd.edu/MCE/Publications/PDFs/FS775.pdf> for more information on animal production.