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fine fescue under the sun"

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WEEDS TREES & TURF

The Magazine of Landscape and Golf Course Management Since 1962



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1986 seed crop gets mixed reviews

■ The seed harvest is progressing with alacrity in the Wilamette Valley region of western Oregon, where 60 percent of the world's grass seed is grown, and also in western Washington, and northern Idaho. The bottom line on seed availability for late 1986 and early 1987: it's a guessing game until the crop is harvested and cleaned. After harvests are completed this month, seed availability (and price) should be more clear.

Here's a smattering of opinions from seed people about this year's crop:

Harry Stalford, International Seed: "The crop looks pretty good. If we get good weather the next three weeks (the last week of June and first two of July) we'll be in good shape."

Bill Rose, Turf-Seed: "The ryes are off in production due to a dry spring, perhaps 20 percent off. The tall fescues weren't hurt as bad, maybe 10 percent off. Bluegrass look like a good crop. The bentgrass looks excellent, as good as I've ever seen them. The fine fescues are drastically off, maybe 40 percent."

Mike McCarthy, E.F. Burlingham & Sons: "The fine fescues may be a short crop, the bluegrasses may be short, the ryes are yet to be seen, and the tall fescues look moderately good though some say it may be a little short."

Doyle Jacklin, Jacklin Seed (the company's seed is grown in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington): "The Kentucky blue proprietaries look good on irrigated land. The common Kentucky blue looks below normal because we've had some hot days south of here (Post Falls, Idaho). The perennial ryegrasses in the Wilamette Valley look excellent. Fine fescues look poor."

Jerry Pepin, Pickseed West: "We are fairly encouraged by the crop. The tall fescues look good—demand keeps going up. We should have at least an average crop of perennial rye. Overall, I think yields will be average, maybe better."

Pepin and Pickseed West have developed Bronco Kentucky bluegrass, for mixing with the turf type tall fescues. Bronco should be available by early September.

Report says pesticide market flat

■ The size of the \$5 billion agricultural chemical market should remain constant through the end of the decade, according to "The U.S. Pesticide Industry in Transition," a news analysis prepared by Frost & Sullivan of New York.

The 273-page report notes virtually all planters who might use agricultural chemicals are already using them. Therefore, an increase in acreage would be necessary for increased usage. The report says there could be a reduction in acreage because of foreign demand reductions or supply increases, major breakthroughs in agricultural productivity, and further declines in American consumption of meat, which is a relatively expensive food in terms of planted acreage support required.

For more information, contact Frost & Sullivan Inc., 106 Fulton St., New York, NY 10038. (212) 233-1080.

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LAWN CARE

Lawn care media scare: the industry strikes back

In March, the magazine *Home Mechanix* ran an article entitled "The Lawn Care Scare," focusing on the problems with chemical lawn care services. The article raised a question of accuracy among lawn care professionals, who responded with their side of the issue.

For example, Bob Styduhar, environmental counsel for ChemLawn Services Corp. in Columbus, Ohio, wrote this: "The article 'The Lawn Care Scare' by Sherry Romeo is inaccurate in both tone and content. It specifically criticizes ChemLawn for not requiring its employees to wear protective clothing while spraying lawns. Such equipment is appropriate and required by law only when handling certain products in concentrated form but not for the dilute, water-based solutions used in spraying lawns..."

"We also take issue with the statement in your article regarding the ap-

propriate re-entry period after a lawn has been sprayed. Re-entry periods for products appear on product labels. A few products used by ChemLawn carry a label recommendation to keep off the lawn until the dilute material dries. It is our experience that materials dry within 30 minutes to two hours after application, depending upon temperature and humidity..."

Jim Brooks, executive vice president of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, wrote this: "Why attack professional lawn care services when we're among the leaders in environmental protection? Members strongly advocate safety, adherence to manufacturer's recommendations, and observance of state and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations. Why say there are no controls? Professionals are so well-trained and closely regulated that we are the ideal way for home-



The March "Home Mechanix" cover.

owners to avoid problems...

"The record shows that through years of careful service, PLCAA members and other lawn care professionals have earned the trust of approximately 8 million residential customers, and about 1.5 million more join every year for the service. Why did you spotlight the risks without saying professionals recognize the risks and weigh those risks realistically? Authoritative health and regulatory officials say there's no threat to humans, pets or the environment from the general use of chemicals that professionals apply to lawns in diluted amounts. After all, these are the same chemicals homeowners are allowed to buy and apply themselves without supervision..."

"Finally, why did you advise readers to learn more about lawn chemicals mainly from activist groups? You could have referred them to their state university extension service, their state pesticide regulatory agency, the federal EPA in Washington D.C., or their regional EPA office and the PLCAA."

Barry Eldridge of Spring Valley, N.Y. wrote: "...Some of the information presented was irrelevant and, in one instance, redundant. Neither Abate nor Vapona (or DDVP) is a lawn care chemical. With respect to the relationship of 2,4-D to Agent Orange, I offer this analogy. Two products that share a common ingredient do not necessarily share the same properties: sodium is a component of table salt and of the pesticide sodium arsenate. Finally, on contamination of ground water by nitrates, the author failed to link the problem to the application of fertilizer rather than to pesticides."



Dr. Bruce Clark of Rutgers University (left center, with glasses) explains coating seeds with fungicide to turf managers at Lofts Field Day.

TURFSEED

Agronomist suggests using coated seeds in hot weather

Turfseeds coated with a fungicide will generally not contract pythium blight, even if planted during the hottest part of the year, according to Dr. Bruce Clarke of Rutgers University.

"When establishing seed in the summer, a fungicide treatment on the seed at a very low rate will help prevent damping off in the seed stage and will prevent pythium after the seed

emerges," Clarke said at the 10th annual Lofts Field Day this summer.

Apron is the only fungicide that should be used to treat turfseed.

"Apron is a powder," Clark noted. "You put it on dry to the seed and it adheres. Apron will give two to three weeks protection against pythium."

However, Clarke said, "cool, dry weather is the best fungicide."

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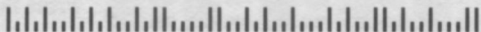
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