

Crop Talk

So how did the 2013 harvest shake out? Below is a synopsis of information we have gathered regarding how our key Willamette Valley crops performed this harvest year:

- Annual ryegrass. Crop was average to slightly below average. Fall usage appears to be down somewhat.
- Turf-type perennial ryegrass. With no real gain in acres, and not much carryover, the 20-30% drop in yields this year is and will pose a challenge for the next 10-12 months, and beyond. Market prices are up and may get higher. Placement of new acres is very difficult. No light at the end of the tunnel.
- Forage tall fescue. Yields on fawn, KY-31 and other forage fescues reportedly off 5-10%.
- Turf-type tall fescues. Reported yields are down 10-15%. Most shipment were nearly right off the cleaners and carryover was nearly non-existent. Spring supply should cover needs this year, with the possibility of enough next year to have an easier start into fall. Prices seem quite stable.
- Orchardgrass. Average to -10% ave. yields on fewer harvested acres are keeping prices steady; maybe bit higher.
- White clover. We are hearing that cleanouts are heavier than normal. Seeing price increase at grower level.
- Crimson clover. With a near-zero carryover, crimson demand was strong early. Once the crop became available the grower price increased, and seed shipped. Overall usage appears to be a bit down, but there is little inventory to be carried over into spring, which will likely be gobbled up before new crop 2014.
- Medium red clover. Harvested acres were down, but yields were good. Again, without carryover, demand kept the price high early. With the total supply low and a long time before the next crop, prices may stay strong.
- Austrian winter peas. Before new crop there was none. After new crop there is none. Demand = Supply. Crop 2014 is a long ways away. Our Windham Winter pea's became a good second option. Limited supplies available for the rest of the year.
- Kentucky Bluegrass and Creeping Red Fescue. While not Willamette Valley crops, these species are facing similar production pressures resulting in higher prices and lower inventories.



How Grass Grows Part 8 Shoot Development: Flowering

“The flowering portion of the grass shoot is called the inflorescence. Formulation of the inflorescence occurs in three distinct phases: 1) the tiller must be mature to respond to environmental conditions that promote flowering; 2) induction by vernalization (or the tiller experiencing sustained low temperatures of <50F -i.e “winter”) and/ or a day-length requirement. 3) Following environmental stimulus, the apical meristem is transformed from a vegetative to a flowering axis. Cells divide then elongate rapidly from the apical meristem and the inflorescence emerges from the middle of the existing leaves.”

- VA Tech's How Grass Grow's interactive presentation. See full presentation under our Resources at SmithSeed.com

