



What's UP with annual ryegrass?

If you didn't think annual ryegrass could go any higher, well... it has. Prompt pricing hasn't been at this level in DECADES. While little new crop trading has occurred, even those numbers are well above what most would consider normal. So what's going on? Why has annual been steadily moving up over the past 24 months?

Maybe a glimpse of recent history gives us some clues. In June of '15, the market was in the mid twenties, and feeling shaky at that. But then Oregon had a record-breaking heat wave which affected the crop significantly. Suddenly, what looked like a bumper crop turned into a bumper of a crop. Field after field of annual ryegrass yields came in well below average. Within 45 days, the Oregon market price leapt 23%!

Usage during the 2015-16 crop year was normal, eating up most of any '14 carryover and the majority of the '15 crop. So coming into June 2016, carryover was relatively low. Again, what was initially anticipated as a decent looking crop turned into a short crop - thanks to another unusual June heat wave. As to be expected, prices increased again.

Yet in spite of higher prices and a severe drought in parts of the Southeast, usage this fall was fairly normal. Winter export demand and retail small packaging demand has also been normal, despite most being purchased at above average prices.

Now that the Southeast has had some rain, there is fresh interest in providing some sort of forage for the decimated pastures. This will likely wipe out any carryover left at dealer/distributor level and draw down any Oregon inventories further. The industry may be down to floor sweepings by June.

To our recollection, this has happened only one other time in the last 40 years.

High-Yielding Early Timothy **KY-EARLY**

As part of our continued effort to bring our customers improved forage solutions, we are pleased to now offer KY-Early Timothy. This variety is an improved selection from Clair, bred for earlier heading, high yields, improved vigor and re-growth.

KY-Early was developed jointly by the KY Ag Experimental Station and the USDA-ARS and has been extensively tested in Kentucky where it continually outperforms many cultivars. In fact, the most recent data shows KY-Early to be at the top of the trials. Note in this chart the significant difference between KY-Early and other varieties.

Timothy Forage Trials, Lexington, KY, 2013-16 Data

Variety	Maturity	Percent Stand		Yield (tons/acre)			
	May 12-13	Oct 14, 2013	Oct 17, 2016	2014 Total	2015 Total	2016 Total	3-year Total
KY-Early	54.7	93	89	3.69	4.39	2.09	10.17*
Derby	52.8	98	89	3.95	3.34	2.21	9.50*
Zenyatta	52.0	96	90	3.66	3.31	1.78	8.74*
Clair	53.3	73	81	3.32	3.40	1.49	8.22*
Summergraze	41.8	99	80	3.22	3.02	1.93	8.18*
Comtol	40.8	98	88	3.25	2.97	1.63	7.85
Climax	41.0	96	84	3.10	2.45	1.39	6.95
LSD		14	11	0.64	0.94	0.79	2.02

Trial sown September 5, 2013.
 1 Average May 12-13, 2014-16. Maturity rating scale: 37 = flag leaf emergence, 45 = boot swollen, 50 = beginning of inflorescence emergence, 58 = complete emergence of inflorescence, 62 = beginning of pollen shed.
 * Not significantly different from the highest numerical value in the column, based on the 0.05 LSD.

While KY-Early seed may be a bit more expensive, the increased return on investment is easy to capture. For example, using \$5/ bale timothy and current retail prices, KY-Early showed a net return of nearly \$350/acre over a 3-yr period. The numbers are exponentially higher when compared to common Climax timothy.

Supplies are limited for 2017, so get your order in now. Contact us for price and availability. * Note: Distribution agreements may limit availability in certain regions.

Persist lives up to its name

During a recent meeting, the following declaration was made by a seed dealer when asked why he sells Persist orchardgrass:

"It is the only grass that holds up as well as KY-31."

He went on to say that the folks in his area don't baby it either. They graze it hard and hay it heavily without a problem. He's not the first to proclaim such accolades - we've been hearing similar stories for the past 15 years. Like Persist, these stories just don't go away. Learn more at PersistOrchardgrass.com

