



Crop Watch

How's the new crop coming along out West you ask? Well, crop conditions look pretty normal and average for this time of the year.

No drought;

No mice;

No pestilence;

No flooding.

Nice, huh? :)

Oregon-Grown Annual Ryegrass and Tall Fescue Movement Good

As reported in the latest Oregon Ryegrass Grower's Seed Commission Report, the past three quarters have all seen very good annual ryegrass movement. The combined numbers for the assessment period of July '06-March '07 for gulf and common annual ryegrass was 255 million lbs. This is the highest assessment for the combined same period over the past five years. These numbers far exceed last year's 187 million lbs, and even exceed the strong numbers of '03-04 (241.2 million lbs.)

We also received data this week from the Oregon Tall Fescue Commission. Assessments for the first three quarters of the '06 harvest are the strongest in the last five years, at almost 170 million lbs. Most of this gain came last fall in the first quarter thanks to high demand and zero carryover from the '05 crop. Still, Oregon-grown turf-type tall fescue seems to be a ever-growing crop!

Titan Ltd. May Help Improve Airport Safety!

Last month, at the 2007 FAA Worldwide Airport Technology Transfer Conference in Atlantic City, NJ, five researchers from the USDA's Wildlife Services presented their two year findings on the use of high endophyte tall fescue varieties at airport runways to help reduce the risk of wildlife-aircraft collisions. According to their report, these types of collisions cause over \$500 million dollars of damage annually in the United States alone. Birds like gulls, geese, hawks, owls, blackbirds, and starlings are the main cause of these collisions, which mostly occur at less than 1,000 feet above ground level.

In an attempt to reduce the amount of these fowl offenders, the USDA is looking at changing the vegetation around the airports 1.) to provide limited food resources (seeds, insects, etc.); 2.) to provide little cover for small animals (thus reducing the attractant to hawks and owls); and 3.) to resist invasion by other plants that would be more attracting to these feathered nuisances.

What better choice than high-endophytic tall fescue, like Titan Ltd? While humans love the newer, slower-growing, pest resistant tall fescues, some small mammals, Canadian geese, and many insects hate the stuff. With this in mind, a study was conducted at seven airfields in the eastern and central US, where multiple varieties of tall fescue, including Titan Ltd. were evaluated during 2005-06.

While their conclusions about tall fescue being the "species of choice" are at this point inconclusive and "many questions need to be answered before recommendations can be made as to what is the best plant or group of plants" for these types of applications, this type of research will undoubtedly spawn more research on ways to take advantages of improved genetics like Titan Ltd., and natural pesticides, like endophytes.

By the way, the next time you fly into Washington Dulles and you see something that looks like a tall fescue trial, note the one that has the highest percentage of ground cover - it will most likely be Titan Ltd., as it was the top ground coverage scorer there last year! Visit www.airporttech.tc.faa.gov/naptf/att07 for the full report.

