

MarketWatch



As usual, December was a pretty slow month with little activity in the current and future markets. That said, what little activity there has been has all been at either stable or stronger prices for bluegrass, fine fescue, and perennial ryegrass. Annual ryegrass and orchardgrass have remained stable. Looking ahead toward Spring, a 'cautious optimism' seems to be in order. Drought stricken parts of the country seem to be enjoying significant quantities of moisture, housing starts are still pretty good in many parts of the country, and inventory carryover at all levels is nominal and definitely manageable. For sure, exceptions exist to each of the above. We hope whatever your situation is, that your spring sales will start early and come in abundance!

CropTalk

Acres come and acres go. Every year brings about change. You probably heard that increased wheat prices gave incentive to many growers to consider crops other than grass seed. For some it was a good reason to take out aging fields. For others, it was simply a logical financial decision. But like most years, there was also new acres planted; some for new varieties, others

ACREAGE CHANGES – WINTER 2002-03		
Species	Change	Comments
Annual Ryegrass	Down 3-5%	North Valley acres down South Valley about the same
Perennial Ryegrass	Up +5%	More acres planted in the Valley. Other areas outside of Oregon – down.
Tall Fescue	20-25% Down	Some feel reduction more than our number
Kentucky Bluegrass	Down 25-30%	From Western ASTA
Creeping Red Fescue	?	Valley acres up, Canadian acres down. Overall production change uncertain.
Chewings Fescue	Up	Increased Oregon production
Orchardgrass	Unchanged	Most plantings were replacement acres
Red Clovers	Down 25%	Oregon acres only
Crimson Clover	Up 25-30%	Oregon acres only. Back to average acres

for increased production of existing varieties, and still others for replacement acres. Come springtime, minimal acres will be taken out and new ones planted as well. But with fall plantings being the lion's share, we thought this would be a good time to report. It's hard to get our arms around the whole picture, and this chart is not meant to be the whole story, but we thought you'd appreciate at least OUR take – *for what it's worth* – of acreage changes this past fall.

Did you know?



Bluegrasses, fine fescues, and bentgrass can begin to germinate at ground temperatures in the high 50's, while tall fescues, ryegrasses, and annual bluegrass need nearly 10 degrees higher temperature to begin germinating! That's encouraging news when the current ground temperature is at freezing! *From the 2002 Seed Pocket Guide by Landscape Management and Golfdom (free download at www.landscapemanagement.net)*

The University of Illinois has a pretty good interactive web site at www.turf.uiuc.edu/turfSpecies/Species.html. The website allows users to select site fertility requirements, desired mowing heights, pH, and other variables. After inputting the variable, the site returns a list of which species perform well under those variables. It also has a good bit of species-specific information and diagrams.

Species	Optimum Temp. for Germination (F°)	Ph Adapatability
Fine Fescues	59-77	5.5-6.5
Bentgrass	59-86	5.0-6.7
Kentucky Bluegrass	59-86	6.0-7.0
Rough Bluegrass	59-86	6.0-7.0
Tall Fescues	68-86	4.7-8.5
Annual Ryegrass	68-86	6.0-7.0
Perennial Ryegrass	68-86	6.0-7.0
Annual Bluegrass	68-89	5.5-6.5