



2013 Grass Seed Crop Forecast

by Glenn Jacklin

We experienced a mild winter here in the Pacific Northwest. Moisture in most areas is marginal, although the mountain snowpack is good. We received minimal rainfall in the fall of 2012 causing fields to green up slowly. The drought also delayed fall plantings until moisture came. Key rains in the spring will be needed to bring the crop along.

New seedings of proprietary Kentucky bluegrass look good in our irrigated production area of the Columbia Basin. Most companies came up short on acreage for fall planting due to competition from other crops. But yields are predicted to be good on most new plantings.

In our dryland production areas, post-harvest residue management was delayed due to the dry arid conditions not allowing growers to burn their fields. Subsequently, burns were very late and fall recovery and green up were late and marginal. Growers are now assessing what fields to keep in and which ones to take out due to slow or no recovery. On top of this, there were few new acres planted last fall due to the lack of moisture, so this will compound shortages well into the 2014 crop.

Commodities of wheat, corn, canola, hay, beans etc. are all bringing in very good returns to the farmers and have been tough to compete against in pricing. Even though consumption of bluegrass is at record lows due to the housing market, look for supplies to tighten.



Supply will be hard pressed to keep up with demand.

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Farmers harvest Kentucky bluegrass seed near Connell, WA.

Jacklin Launches First Smart Phone App in Grass Seed Biz

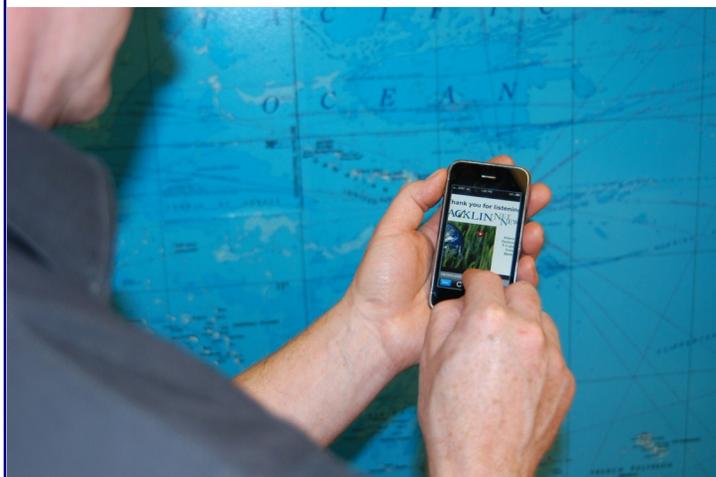
by Doug Brede, Ph.D.

Jacklin Seed is proud to introduce a comprehensive educational resource, right in the palm of your hand: The new app for iPhone and Android platforms is the first such innovation in the grass seed industry. And the best part - it's FREE at the app store (wireless charges may apply). The new application contains valuable seed information for the golf course superintendent, athletic field manager, homeowner, and landscaper. Many of the educational resources are full action video, hosted by PhD scientists at Jacklin.



The research update section of the Jacklin Seed smartphone app contains over 40 educational documents that gives you the ability to search across multiple species on over 18 unique traits, that range from salt tolerance, drought, pests, interseeding, renovation, and much more.

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The Jacklin smartphone app puts a library of turfgrass knowledge in your hands, no matter where you are, or what time of day or night. Download it free from the iPhone or Android app store.

Seed forecast, continued

Look for bluegrass pricing to continue to stay firm and possibly strengthen as we move into 2013 crop.

Tall fescue fields coming out of winter in the Willamette Valley of Oregon look good at this time, however they will need some timely rains to finish out as we are behind in average moisture amounts. Carryover inventories of tall fescue from the seed market crash of 08/09 are for the most part cleaned up. Pricing has strengthened over the last 6 months due to low 2012 crop yields and increased consumption. Plantings in 2012 were minimal, bringing acres up roughly 5% from 2012 levels, as growers chose other crops over grass acres. This meant that most seed dealers came up short on their needs for new plantings for 2013 crop. For the future, we could see some shortages as we move into the 2014 spring selling season and further strengthening of price.

Perennial ryegrass is my red-alert species of the spring. Growers were reluctant to plant new fields, again due to strong pricing of competing crops. New plantings last fall were very late due to the dry fall, and baby fields went into winter very, very small. As we move into spring, we are seeing winter damage to new and old fields due to slugs. We anticipate a fair number of acres will be plowed out this spring and planted to wheat. This will put pressure on already tight inventories, and the 2013 crop is not looking good.

Similar to bluegrass, fine fescue consumption fell off drastically at the start of the 08/09 crash, and really has not rebounded. As a result, prices have firmed up, and we look for this species to tighten up on supply and strengthen in price, being pulled along by the other major turf species. Production levels are low, again, the result of few new plantings as growers have chosen the path of more lucrative cash crops.

Bentgrass is one species that continues to have adequate inventories, as golf course construction drew to a "crawl." Hopefully consumption will pick up and inventories move out. There are few acres of production in of bentgrass, so don't look for this species to change in price any time soon.

Summary: As we move into the 2013 planting season, we are having little interest from growers to plant new spring acres. The profits from cash commodity crops far outpace the returns from grass seed right now. In addition, cost of grass seed production has risen, making grass seed not so attractive. The pendulum will swing eventually, but until then, we will see pressure on supplies through 2013. In addition, last fall's drought is causing ripple effects that will be felt on into 2014. Housing starts have picked up, pegged at just under 1 million estimated for 2013. This is still far below the 2.2 million of 2006, but getting closer to the benchmark experts consider healthy. 🏠

Simplot Purchases Columbia Basin Seed Cleaning Plant

Jacklin's grass seed cleaning operations will be transitioning from Idaho to Othello, WA, during the next three years. The move eventually will result in closing the existing Jacklin Seed plant at Post Falls. The decision was made based on the need for production facilities to be closer to primary seed-growing areas, according to Chris Claypool, Jacklin general manager. Jacklin's two research facilities in northern Idaho will remain open and unaffected as the plant relocates.

"Jacklin Seed was the first company to start growing Kentucky bluegrass in the Columbia Basin more than 30 years ago," he said. "People said it couldn't be done there, but with the help of dedicated growers and the best staff, it became a success. The growing area for the bluegrass industry in the Pacific Northwest has shifted, and this new location near Othello will keep Jacklin Seed in the midst of the market."

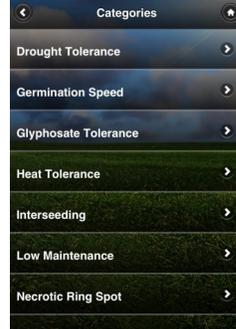
Scotney Springs Seed, the company acquired by Simplot in the Othello area, has now become part of the Jacklin organization, according to Jeff Roesler, vice president of the AgriBusiness Group. The Scotney operation includes seed-cleaning facilities and a warehouse. There will be a transition phase for moving Jacklin operations from one location to another, and bluegrass seed grown in Idaho and Oregon will be brought to the Othello location for cleaning. 🏠

Smartphone app, continued

Another portion of the app helps you get the right seed in the right place. The seed selector personalizes the process of selecting which grass species and variety perfectly suit your particular needs.



Scan QR code to go to app store.



This section allows you to select your region, industry sector, turfgrass species of interest, and what traits are of most importance at your particular site. After entering this information, the top performing cultivars based on your selections will be recommended.

Need to find out which bluegrass germinates fastest? Or what bentgrass is easiest to interseed? Or what ryegrass best suits North Dakota? The Jacklin app's got it.

The presentations section is an interactive feature that enables you to watch and listen to short presentations on current topics delivered by **Jacklin Seed** scientists and breeders. You can watch them at your desk, in the field, or anywhere you get cellular service. 🏠