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Research Newsletter

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Converting Poa annua Sports Fields using Gly-Rye Perennial Ryegrass

Waukegan's Greg Petry Sports Park in Waukegan, IL has been working with Jacklin Seed Agronomist Mark Grundman to convert some of the poa annua dominated soccer fields to Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass using Jacklin Gly-Rye®. The sports park was looking for a quick conversion that could be done in a matter of weeks without taking the field out of play for an entire season. The answer – Jacklin Seed's Gly-Rye perennial ryegrass.

The pictuere on the left shows the results after a conversion done in the fall of 2017. On the right is a field that is still dominated by Poa annua. The pictures were taken May 9, 2018, and still no sign of the poa annua coming back into the recently converted field.

The field was prepped for interseeding by slicing and scalping, then seeded with Gly-Rye. Shortly after the seedlings emerged the team applied glyphosate at 14 oz/A, then seeded a second time with a combination of Gly-Rye and Kentucky bluegrass. *(continued, p. 2)*

2018/2019 Season Grass Seed Forecast

By Glenn Jacklin

The 2018 grass seed crop is starting to take shape, and barring some un-foreseen Mother Nature event like frost during seed fill or heat during pollination, we are expecting average to good yields. Here is a run down by species:

Kentucky Bluegrass: In the Bluegrass production areas of the irrigated Mid-Columbia Basin in Washington State, and the dryland production areas of the North Idaho growing region, we are expecting average to good yields. Winter in the production area was fairly normal, with adequate cold temperatures for the bluegrass varieties to vernalize.

Our spring was cooler than normal with above average rainfall in all locations. Due to the cool and wet conditions growers were challenged to get fields sprayed and weeds treated timely. Most fields are now heading up, and some in the early production areas are already pollinating at the time of this writing.

We expect higher prices for 2018 crop bluegrass, and continued shortages, so you should book seed early.

Perennial Ryegrass: The main production area is the Willamette Valley. Similar to other areas, growers were late getting fields sprayed due to weather issues, but the cleaning machines are good at getting out the small seeded weeds like Poa annua. Yield wise, conditions were favorable and the fields looked to be heading up fine. We should expect average yields at this time. The only concern here is that there has been no measurable rain the month of May, and we will need a good shot soon or the plants will suffer.

The seed trade has carryover from 2017 but acres are almost at an all-time low for 2018 crop which could balance out supply and demand. Pricing should be lower, but due to shortage of acres we shall see.

Gly-Rye, continued

Using this interseeding method and a glyphosate application, the team was able to do a quick conversion while maintaining turf cover. The final product is a poa-free Kentucky bluegrass/perennial ryegrass playing surface. The sports park is planning to use this process to convert all of the soccer fields over the next year.

A soccer field converted last fall from primarily Poa annua to a mix of Jacklin's Gly-Rye and Kentucky bluegrass.

Fall field conversion process from poa annua to Gly-Rye and Kentucky bluegrass:

Day 1: Prepped field by slicing 2 directions and scalping; seeded Gly Rye at 10 lbs/M (50 g/m2)
Day 3: Applied starter fertilizer (16-28-12) at 1 lb P/M (5 g/m2)
Day 8: Seeded 10 lbs/M (50 g/m2) each Gly-Rye and Kentucky bluegrass. Applied glyphosate at 14 oz/A (1 Liter/ha).
Day 16: Applied 16-28-12 Starter Fertilizer
Day 22: Applied 16-16-12 Fertilizer as part of regular soccer field fertilizer schedule
Day 35: First mow in 2 passes. First pass at 2.5" (6.35 cm), second pass at 1.5 (3.8 cm)"
Day 38: Applied 16-28-12 Starter Fertilizer
7 Weeks: Applied Tenacity at 5 oz/A (366 ml/ha) and applied 16-16-12 Fertilizer as part of regular soccer field fertilizer schedule. Regular soccer maintenance schedule followed for the remainder of the fall.

Seed, continued

Tall Fescue: The fields are just heading up and it appears to be a normal crop coming. Quality should be good since growers have more selective herbicide options with tall fescue than with perennial ryegrass. Supplies will be tight due to no carryover from 2017. Book early because we expect to be sold out.

Keep in mind the only reason the tall fescue market increased prices higher and higher this past season was because of the devastating KY-31 tall fescue crop out of the Midwest. Had the KY-31 crop been normal, the industry would have had carryover tall fescue and weaker prices. We will see what happens this summer with harvests in Oregon and the Midwest.

Fine Leaf Fescues: Fields in the hill country of the valley are heading up well. Similar to tall fescue, the fine fescues have a few more chemistry tools growers can use, so quality should not be an issue. Acres are about the same as last year, so supplies will most likely remain tight for red, sheep, Chewing's and hard fescue. Prices remain firm.

Bentgrass: Our fields look very good at this point. These are irrigated fields, so lack of rain won't be an issue and quality should be good. The demand for T-1, V8, and L-93 XD has put pressure on getting more inventory. Alpha, Nightlife, Kingdom and Armor are gaining more popularity too. We have unique bentgrasses for which each provide a different solution to golf course problems. Expect prices to increase due to increased production costs.

Poa trivialis: Supplies will be limited in the industry. Demand has exceeded supply as there are limited areas to grow this grass. We expect it to be sold out so book early, and expect to pay U$ .30-.40/lb higher prices.

Warm season and Native grasses: The largest species is Bermuda. We have never seen prices as high as we experienced this past season. Demand plummeted because the price became too high. We hope for better crops to reposition Bermuda and zoysia into markets. Expect native grasses to be average to limited on supplies.

A Kentucky bluegrass production field near Nez Perce, Idaho on May 16, 2018.

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