

**MINNESOTA TURF SEED GROWERS NEWSLETTER**  
**July 21, 2009**

**RYEGRASS GROWING DEGREE DAYS (GDD)**

Ryegrass GDD will be tracked for the 2009 growing season with comparisons to the last three years. A base temp of 32 degrees F will be used for ryegrass (T-Base =32 F). The GDD information presented in the table below is year to date data through and including July 19 for 2006 to 2009.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>09 vs. 08</b>
March	30	6	90	53	+24
April	247	202	322	529	+45
May	515	501	746	730	+14
June	860	870	990	943	-10
July 1-19	556	605	648	734	-49
Total	2,208	2,184	2,796	2,989	+24

The 2009 season is 24 GDD ahead of 2008, but -588 and -781 GDD behind the 2007 and 2006 seasons, respectively. The average GDD/day for the first 19 days of July was 31.8, 34.1 and 38.6 for 2008, 2007 and 2006, respectively. How does 2009 compare? The accumulated GDD/day in first 19 days of July in 2009 was 29.3/day.

**GENERAL CROP CONDITION**

Ryegrass

Fall seeded ryegrass ranges from early heading to pollen shed. Spring seeded ryegrass, for the most part, has shed pollen on the main stem and is now in the seed filling stage. The fall seeded ryegrass stands are variable, with some fully headed and others that range from headed to vegetative. This range in ryegrass maturity will make it difficult make a determination on when to swath.

Bluegrass

Combines have been out in 'Park' and 'Minnfine' bluegrass fields over the weekend.

**PEST MANAGEMENT**

Ryegrass

Leaf and stem rust can be a serious disease in ryegrass. Leaf and stem rust has been detected in ryegrass in Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties. To date, rust infestations have been light and variable.

With confirmed rust in ryegrass, the two primary strategies for rust control in ryegrass would be:

- 1) Spray a fungicide as soon as it can be scheduled or,
- 2) Scout ryegrass fields for rust every two- to- three days as in favorable environmental conditions rust can increase rapidly and this fungal pathogen can "explode" in just a few days

Leaf and stem rust that infects ryegrass is carried into our area on southerly winds. Rust infection and spread is most likely with daily high temperatures in the mid-70's and lows in the 60's. Rust also

requires free water on the leaf surface. We usually have dew on the grass until mid-morning in the summer and many days have temperatures that fit into the ideal range for rust development.

Several fungicides are effective for rust control in ryegrass. However, if rust is present it will be important to choose a fungicide that has curative properties. Quilt and tilt will provide some curative activity and will be the products of choice for rust control at this point of the season. Quilt rates from 8 to 10 oz/A have been successfully used in ryegrass. The higher rate will provide a few more days protection, and the 10 oz rate will protect the head and flag leaf for three to four weeks.

## **CROP MANAGEMENT**

Grasshoppers are an insect pest that can be a problem in grass seed crop. Field scouting has indicated light to moderate infestations of grasshoppers. Action thresholds for grasshopper nymphs are 30-45/square yard (6 to 8 adults or 25% defoliation) if grass is vegetative and insect feeding is on the leaf tissue. Threshold levels will be lower if insect feeding is on the seed head. Field scouting will determine the infestation level and the type of feeding.

Armyworms are another insect pest that can damage grass seed crops. Armyworms moths tend to lay eggs in lodged areas of the fields and will be the first place to check for armyworms.

## **UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RESEARCH**

### **Ryegrass date of planting trial**

The first seeding date of a ryegrass date of planting has been seeded at the Magnusson Research Farm. Seedings will continue every two weeks until October. Ryegrass planting rates are 5 and 8 pounds with wheat at 20#/A.

### **Ryegrass starter fertilizer trial**

A trial will be initiated this week to evaluate the response of ryegrass to starter fertilizer. Trial objective is to evaluate ryegrass seed tolerance and ryegrass seedling growth with and without starter fertilizer. Starter fertilizers are important in other crop (wheat, corn and sunflowers). This trial will help determine the response of ryegrass to a starter fertilizer. This starter fertilizer may increase the fall growth rate and/or improve winter survivability of ryegrass.

**Herbicide tolerance study:** In response to the concern that many of you have expressed over the herbicide resistant wild oat problem, Don Wyse from the University of Minnesota is initiating studies to better understand the issue. The first study is focused on fields where producers have observed little or no control of wild oat populations following herbicide treatments for two years or more. If you have a field where wild oat is not being controlled with current herbicide treatments please call Dave Grafstrom (218 463 1071) or email [Dave.Grafstrom@northlandcollege.edu](mailto:Dave.Grafstrom@northlandcollege.edu) to set up a time for him to come out to your farm and collect wild oat seed samples from the field. The wild oat populations will then be evaluated for resistance to selected herbicides in St. Paul. Each producer will receive a summary of the results from the evaluation of their wild oat populations and the information will be kept confidential.

The next edition of this newsletter will be released on July 28, 2009.