

MINNESOTA TURF SEED GROWERS NEWSLETTER
August 25, 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 August 23 for 2006 to 2009.

Year	2009	2008	2007	2006	09 vs. 08
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	943	1034	1156	1206	-91
August 1-23	757	804	744	795	-47
Total	3,352	3,417	4,048	4,256	-65

This will be the last week of reporting GDD for the 2009 season as most of the ryegrass has been swathed.

GENERAL CROP CONDITION

Ryegrass

Last week was a good one for ryegrass swathing and several area fields were harvested. Ryegrass can mature quickly so, be to talk to your seeds man and keep an eye on ryegrass fields that are close to maturity. When ryegrass is close to the 40% moisture level, seed moisture can drop 2% points or more per day!

The majority of the ryegrass has been swathed. Combines will be in the fields this week if the weather forecast holds true.

Bluegrass

Burning of bluegrass will continue this week.

CROP MANAGEMENT

Ryegrass

Can ryegrass be dried? That questions been asked recently with the wet humid weather. Ryegrass has been successfully dried in an air bin. Ryegrass seed harvested in the 15 to 18% range **must** be dried down to a moisture content of 11% or less. If heat is to be used, make sure that the temperature is less than 100F and make sure the seed doesn't get too hot to which can reduce the germination of the seed.

When setting the combine for ryegrass, a target for ryegrass bushel weight is 24 pounds/bushel off the combine. With a ryegrass test weight in the 24pounds/bu range, it helps with the flowability of ryegrass seed in augers and air bins. The light seed that blows out the back of the combine, often times, is the seed that removed at the conditioning plant and this light seed is one of the causes bridging in the bin and may be a source for hot spots in the bin.

Bluegrass

With the bluegrass harvest almost complete the next step in bluegrass production is burning. A good burn is one of the CRITICAL steps in bluegrass management. A good burn sets the stage for seed production for the next season. Relative humidity levels in the 40's or lower tend to promote a clean burn of bluegrass straw.

Remember to get a burning permit and it's always a good idea to give your neighbors a "heads up" when you plan to burn. One of the first reactions to smoke in the neighborhood is a house or building fire. A phone call or two prior to burning will ease some of this anxiety.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RESEARCH

Rust Collection

Cristal Cisneros, a graduate student in St. Paul, is working on ryegrass rust as a part of her graduate studies. She would like to gather ryegrass rust samples from the ryegrass growing counties of northwest Minnesota. If you have, or know of ryegrass plants that have rust, contact your agronomist, seeds man or send a reply by e-mail and arrangements will be made to get these samples to St. Paul.

Ryegrass Date of Planting Trial

The fourth date of seeding of this trial is scheduled this week. Ryegrass is seeded at 5 and 8 pounds/acre with wheat as a cover crop at 20#/acre. Seeding dates will continue until late September.

Bluegrass and Ryegrass Variety Trials

Bluegrass and ryegrass variety trials are scheduled to be seeded at the Magnusson Research Farm this week.

Ryegrass Starter Fertilizer Trial

Preliminary results of this trial indicate a starter fertilizer may have benefits on seedling vigor. It appears that up to 30 units of phosphate is having a positive effect on ryegrass seedling growth and development. The potash treatments are not as visible. This trial will be monitored into the fall. However, it appears phosphate may promote seedling growth and development. Will that have an impact on winter survivability? This determination will be made next spring.