

MINNESOTA TURF SEED GROWERS NEWSLETTER
July 27, 2010

RYEGRASS GROWING DEGREE DAYS (GDD)

Ryegrass GDD will be tracked for the 2010 growing season with comparisons to the last four years. A base temp of 32 degrees F will be used for ryegrass (T-Base = 32 F). The GDD information presented in Table 1 is March to July in 2006 - 2009 and March, April, May, June and July 1 - 25 in 2010.

Table 1. Growing degree days (GDD) for March - July in 2006 - 2009 and March, April, May, June and July 1-25 in 2010 at Roseau MN.

Year	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2010 vs. 09
March	137	30	6	90	53	+107
April	476	247	202	322	529	+229
May	707	515	501	746	730	+192
June	911	860	870	990	943	+51
July		943	1,034	1,156	1,206	
July 1-25	914					
Total	3,145	2,595	2,613	3,304	3,461	

Last week we accumulated an average of 36.1 GDD/day. Spring wheat harvest is right around the corner. If ryegrass is to be seeded into wheat stubble it is important to get a **uniform spread of the wheat straw and chaff**. Chaff spreaders will spread hulls and other “fines”. A uniform spread of the wheat straw is the first step in successful ryegrass stand establishment. More on ryegrass stand establishment into wheat stubble in next week’s newsletter.

GENERAL CROP CONDITION

Ryegrass

Swathers were busy last week and most of the ryegrass has been cut. Combines will be harvesting ryegrass this week, weather permitting. Early harvest reports have the ryegrass crop above average.

Bluegrass

Short term forecast suggests an opportunity to burn bluegrass fields later in the week.

PEST MANAGEMENT

Ryegrass

CROP MANAGEMENT

Ryegrass

Many area ryegrass fields have been swathed. As the ryegrass plant matures, fields can mature quickly, especially with warm days of late July into August. When ryegrass is close to the 40% moisture level, seed moisture can drop 2% points or more per day!

As ryegrass seed moisture levels decline, the amount of seed shatter will increase. Ryegrass fields that have turned quickly may have to be swathed in the early morning and evening. This technique of not swathing mid-day was a management practice used to reduce seed shatter in timothy seed production.

Bluegrass

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. A desiccant should be considered if the bluegrass straw is light, poor distribution of straw or excessive bluegrass growth. 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.

RYEGRASS SEED STORAGE MANAGEMENT

Ryegrass seed quality during storage is a critical component in preserving seed viability. Removing seed moisture and maintaining seed moisture within a narrow range is essential in successful storage of ryegrass seed. Air flow, temperature, humidity, bin size, amount of seed in the bin can impact the amount of moisture that can be removed from the seed. Charts are available for many crops and seed types. Limited data and is available for ryegrass. A review of available information and recommendations will be included in next week's newsletter.

The next edition of this newsletter will be released on August 3, 2010.