

## “RUTGERS CORNER”

*‘Perennial Ryegrass Varieties for New Jersey Athletic Fields’* by Dr. James Murphy

Perennial ryegrass is popular in many parts of the world because of its ability to rapidly establish turf with an attractive, leafy appearance and a persistent, wear tolerant surface. Present varieties have been developed with increased stress tolerance, improved resistance to many pests, cleaner mowing, a lower growth habit and reduced mowing requirement, darker green color, more uniform texture, and higher shoot density. The varieties ‘Linn’ and ‘Nui’ should be avoided because the very poor mowing quality, low shoot density, and poor disease resistance of these grasses will result in unsatisfactory turf.

Although improvements in summer performance and pest resistance have been made, further improvements are needed to realize the full potential of perennial ryegrass, particularly for regions with hot, humid summers. Cold hardiness and the ability to tolerate long periods of cover from ice sheets are other weaknesses of perennial ryegrass that can be important during the very occasional severe winters in New Jersey. For this reason, it is a good strategy to include Kentucky bluegrasses in a mixture with perennial ryegrass, since Kentucky bluegrass has excellent cold hardiness. Such mixtures should consist of one or more Kentucky bluegrass varieties in combination with two or more of the turf-type perennial ryegrass varieties with the following standards (percentage by weight):

85-95% Kentucky bluegrass

5-15% Perennial Ryegrass(Table 1)

**NOTE:** Lower maintenance varieties of Kentucky bluegrass include the Bellevue Type; Mid-Atlantic Type; and Aspen, Cheri, Ram I, and NuStar. For more information on Kentucky bluegrass varieties see Rutgers Cooperative Extension publication FS738 at :

<http://www.rce.rutgers.edu/pubs/pdfs/fs738.pdf>

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Table 1. Recommended turf-type perennial ryegrass varieties.

### Very High Quality

Allstar<sup>2</sup> Amazing

Applaud Barlennium

Brightstar II Charismatic

Churchill Elfkin

Exacta Fiesta II

Gator III Integras

Jet Nexus

Palmer III Paragon

Pennant II Pinnacle II

Pizzazz Premier II

Promise Radiant

Seville II Skyhawk

SR 4500 SRX 4801

Stellar Wilmington

High Quality

Affirmed Allsport

Ascend Calypso II

Catalina Charger II

Divine Legacy II

Majesty Manhattan 3

Panther Phantom

Pleasure XL Secretariat

### RUTGERS WEBSITES

Center for Turfgrass Science  
<http://aesop.rutgers.edu/~turf>

Turfgrass Management Program  
<http://aesop.rutgers.edu/~murphy>

Rutgers Cooperative Extension  
<http://www.rce.rutgers.edu>