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several seasons until the most desirable product is finally found. If a seed is believed to merit production, planting on a large scale is performed. The seeds are planted in the fall within lots which average 40 acres, but can range as high as 100 acres. The seeds are applied with a drill type machine that drops the seed into the ground. Immediately following, in the same process, a narrow strip of charcoal is sprayed over the row of soil to purify the seed from a preceding massive application of Karmex at a rate of 3 lbs/A to eradicate all other undesirable weeds.

During the period of germination until harvest, much work is involved with hoeing of the rows and applications of herbicides. Longshore states, "I was most impressed with the cleanliness of the fields and the manner of professionalism within the crews." Round-up is applied from a large spray tank pulled by a tractor, with individual hand guns of five to six rows at a time. Employees walk through the fields to spray out any undesirables. Fertilizer applications average a total of 4 lbs of N/1,000/yr. Relatively few pesticides are applied. Mother Nature seems to be very kind to this region of the country as the weather generally provides for an ideal harvest.

The growing season comes to a climax around mid-summer as harvest usually occurs in July. The process begins with the swathing of the seed which is the cutting of the seed stalks. Timing is critical as moisture from the dew must be present in order to keep the seeds intact. This is usually done from 8 p.m. to midnight and then restarts from 6 a.m. until 9 a.m. or when the dew begins to dry just past sunrise. The combining of the seed or the picking up of the material is then performed during the dry period of the day which occurs approximately from 11 a.m. until 7 or 8 p.m.

The seed material, once harvested, begins the final process of being cleaned. This involves four (4) major processes, whereupon the final results produce bags upon bags of pure seed material. Stage one of the cleaning process involves sizing sieves or large types of screens which remove most all foreign matter. Approximately 80% of the material left is of pure seeds. An air stream process is then used for removal of dust and fragments of plant matter resulting with just only seeds to be processed. A series of indents then picks the seeds into regions of desirable and undesirable seeds. A gravity table is the final process. This consists of tables that shake the seeds of heavier and larger particle

sizes from those of lighter and smaller sizes. The final result produces the desirable material which stays in the middle.

From here, the ultimate step is the certification of the seed. Dr. William Meyers can best describe the certification as "the added insurance to the customer that he is getting the genetic quality of what the breeder developed." The certification program of the State of Oregon is one of the foremost, thorough and most respected in the country. Under the program, an average of 120,000 acres per year are monitored. Oregon produces 75% of all grass seed nationwide.

Theoretically, the seed is the beginning of all. However, if you're beginning is to start on the right track, one must employ the best research and development. We, as turfgrass professionals, must be aware of the best products available and produce the ultimate product within our means. ■

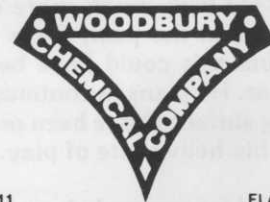
## LOGO BORROWED

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