

New buffalograss seed cultivars from Native Turf Group

MURDOCK, Neb. — Native Turf Group is making two new cultivars of buffalograss seed available to turf managers and golf courses for field testing in 1993. Meanwhile, several new cultivars of improved buffalograss are undergoing continued evaluation this year and will be available for commercial use in 1994.

Buffalograss' low-growing profile reduces mowing requirements, and it can survive with less water and pest control than bluegrass, bentgrass or bermudagrass. It also needs less fertilizer.

"We are developing several cultivars of true turf-type buffalograss which will meet the demand for desirable ecological characteristics, along with better aesthetic and turf qualities," said Dr. Robert M. Ahring, NTG project leader at Enid, Okla.

"We aren't interested in putting out 'warmed over' varieties of forage-type buffalograss that don't have the color or the sod-forming characteristics turf managers want. There are seeded varieties available that don't meet turf quality standards because they haven't been effectively screened," Ahring said.

The NTG intends to have some 50 acres of buffalograss in production this season, at locations in Nebraska and Oklahoma. Harvested seed will be made available for limited field testing this year. Even

Best Sand gives turf scholarship to Clark student

CHARDON, Ohio — Best Sand Corp. has awarded its second annual turfgrass management scholarship to James Joseph Campion III, a turfgrass management student at Clark State Community College in Springfield. The scholarship covers the cost of tuition and books for the 1992-93 school year.

Announcement and presentation of the scholarship was made by Stuart Lipp, golf course marketing manager for Best Sand.

Campion intends to pursue a career as a golf course superintendent. He has served as a student intern at Baltimore Country Club in Lutherville, Md., and has worked at Kittyhawk Golf Course in Dayton and the National Cash Register course in Kettering. Campion is a member of the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation and Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

The Best Sand Scholarship is awarded annually to a turfgrass management student from either Ohio State University in Columbus, the Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster, or Clark State Community College in Springfield.

To qualify, applicants must be a second-year student at ATI or Clark State or in their second, third or fourth year at Ohio State.

newer cultivars are being grown in observation plots this year, in Nebraska, Oklahoma and New Mexico. In addition, five lines are entered in the National Buffalograss Turf Trials, with plots at 40 locations around the country.

The NTG has exclusive worldwide rights to propagate and market selected seeded buffalograss lines from the University of Nebraska, where cultivars selected especially for desirable turf qualities are under development. Dr.

Terry Riordan heads up the Nebraska program, which is based on clones selected from throughout the Great Plains region over the past eight years. The new varieties have done well in such diverse areas as Dallas; Lincoln, Neb.; Ithaca, N.Y.; Tucson and Yuma, Ariz.

Dr. Riordan says the new buffalograss lines have the advantage of using about 75 percent less water than cool-season grasses.

"Since roughs may comprise up to 60 percent of actual golf course

acreage, they are an ideal place to conserve water, energy and pesticide costs," says Riordan.

Because of its low growing nature, buffalograss offers turf managers the option of mowing only once every four to six weeks, or it can be maintained as high-quality turf and mowed weekly.

Buffalograss is sometimes propagated by vegetative "plugs" and can even be sodded. However, for wide-area planting, the new seeded cultivars offer the most eco-

nomical means of establishment.

The advantages of the new turf-type cultivars being introduced by NTG, according to Dr. Ahring, are that they form a tighter sod, have a shorter growth habit so they can be mowed less frequently, and have a more desirable color.

"We are even looking at regionally adapted varieties, where a buffalograss cultivar is bred specifically for lawns in the northern Plains area, for example," Ahring said.

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