

lose their natural color during the summer heat or are too slow in greening up in the early spring; they are not quick to heal an injury in the green or the roots are too shallow, or a dozen other mis-behaviors.

Bond feels the grass breeder has about one chance in a thousand of reaching his goal of a perfect strain but he never quits trying. Perhaps that is one reason why his business has grown from a small nursery in a vacant lot to the largest creeping bent stolon nursery in the United States with over 14 acres under bent grass cultivation and branch nurseries in Farmington, Iowa and Richmond, Va.

In addition to the 10,000 sq. ft. of bent stolons to be donated to the USGA Green Section, a prize of 5,000 sq. ft. is being given away during the convention to a lucky ticket holder.

Oregon Valley Harvests Huge Grass Seed Crop

Two and one-half million pounds of clean, weed-free grass seed for the lawns and country club fairways of the nation were harvested in the Grande Ronde valley, La Grande, Ore., in 1947. Chan Baker, well known seedman reports. Baker is Eastern representative of Wagner with offices at Milford, Conn. This is the largest harvest since the industry was started on an experi-

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mental 20-acre patch of land in 1931 by H. L. Wagner and his son, Marion.

The valley's first grass crop was planted and cultivated by hand while prospering wheat farmers ridiculed the idea, warning that the land would grow wheat but little else. Today, from that small beginning in 1931, the grass seed industry has spread out over more than 3,000 acres and has brought an increase in income to the valley from \$6,000 the first year to well over \$1,250,000.

Most of the acreage is in creeping fescue, chewing fescue, alta fescue and the recently developed bent grasses which reportedly were supposed to thrive best in the coastal areas. Growers have found, however, the grasses develop surprisingly well a distance inland where they have the benefit of a good dry harvest season.

The fledgling grass seed industry which started with that first successful crop found new acreage being planted each year until now more than 125 other farmers have turned some of their richly productive wheat fields over to the cultivation of grass. The gamble taken by Wagner in face of the ridicule of his neighboring farmers paid big dividends in the years that have followed. Today he will tell you the Grande Ronde valley is "the best grass seed producing area in the United States."

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