

Noer Facility Chosen as Site for National Tall Fescue Test

by Tom Salaiz

The National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) policy committee has chosen U.W.-Madison as one of the locations for the upcoming National Tall Fescue Test. The exact number of entries is not known until seed arrives from seed companies in August. We are expecting 90-100 entries. Plans are to seed the study in late August or early September depending on when the seed arrives from NTEP.

The maintenance regime planned for our evaluation involves mowing at 2.5", nitrogen fertilization at 4 lbs/M/S, and irrigation to prevent stress. The cultivars will be evaluated for color, quality, rate of establishment, winter injury, and disease incidence.

As you know, tall fescue is a coarse textured, bunch-type, cool season turfgrass with uses ranging from sports fields to roadsides. Its coarse leaf texture limits its use to lower maintenance areas. The bunch type growth habit of tall fescue also limits its use in blends with other finer leaved turfgrasses such as Kentucky bluegrass. Tall fescue is adapted to a wide range of soil conditions and has good heat and drought tolerance compared to other cool season turfgrasses, but has relatively poor low temperature hardiness.

By looking at the number of entries expected in the trial, one can see that considerable work is being done to improve tall fescue with respect to leaf texture, rhizome development, and low temperature hardiness. Participation in this trial will reveal those improved cultivars adapted to Southern Wisconsin and hopefully will reveal those cultivars suited to blending.

MISSION STATEMENT DEVELOPED FOR NOER FACILITY

Mission statements have been developed for several of the outlying Agricultural Research Stations to help guide research and education activities at these stations. Such a mission statement was developed for the Noer Facility

cooperatively by Chuck Koval—Entomology, Marsh Finner—Director of Ag. Research Stations, Wayne Kussow—Soils, Tom Salaiz—Manager of Noer Facility, and Gayle Worf—Plant Pathology, with input from Craig Grau—Plant Pathology, and the turfgrass industry. The mission statement reads as follows:

Preamble

Turfgrasses add to quality of life by virtue of their social, economic, and environmental value, as well as their recreational applications. Turfgrass culture is a major state industry. Annual expenditures on turfgrass establishment and maintenance approximate the market value of corn grown in the state and the acreage of turf maintained ranks fifth among all crops grown. The future growth of the turfgrass industry is assured by continual expansion of the service-oriented sector of the U.S. economy.

Mission

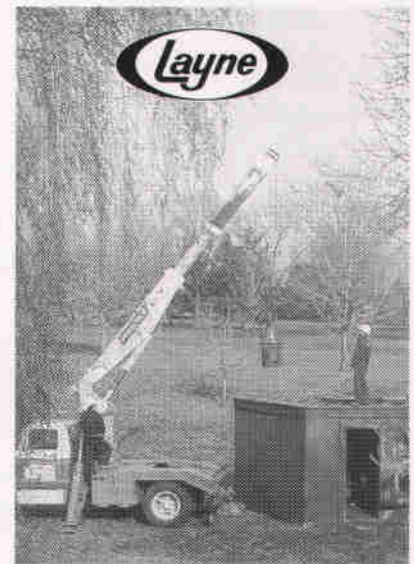
The O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility is dedicated to the testing, development, and promotion of turfgrasses and turfgrass management technologies. The facility will provide the physical base necessary to conduct high quality research and offer educational opportunities.

Goals

1. Promote development of a comprehensive turfgrass research program that:
 - addresses social, economic, and environmental problems and concerns arising from turfgrass use and management,
 - generates a multi-disciplinary systems approach, and
 - involves participation in regional and national studies.
2. Promote the educational functions of the facility for the benefit of CALS students, the turfgrass profession and the general public through extension education programs.

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