

TurfGrass TRENDS



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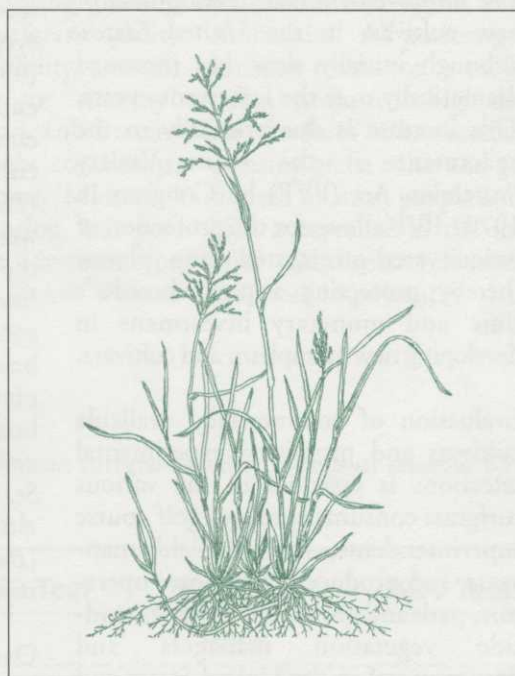
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The Past, Present and Future of Turfgrass Improvement

by Kevin N. Morris

The genetic improvement and development of turfgrasses has always been a preferred avenue in solving turfgrass problems. In the past, almost all commercially available turfgrasses were *ecotype selections*. Ecotype selections are found on golf courses, parks, cemeteries, etc. and have performed well in that particular situation over a long period. In other words, nature was the mechanism for selecting the best turfgrass. Some of the most famous, landmark turfgrass varieties, including 'Merion' Kentucky bluegrass (commercialized in 1947) and 'Kentucky-31' tall fescue (commercialized in 1931), are ecotype selections. Both of these grasses were released to the general public when very few other varieties were available. Merion was considered the "Cadillac" of grasses for many years because of its appearance and superior disease resistance, when compared to the other varieties available at that time. Kentucky-31 was developed for use in pastures, but was soon recognized as a hardy turfgrass for areas with hot, humid summers and moderately cold winters.



Kentucky bluegrass

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