

2013

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SFMANJ Fall Field Day

November 7, 2013
East Brunswick Vo-Tech High School
East Brunswick, NJ
856.514.3179
www.sfmanj.org

New Jersey State League of Municipalities

November 19-21, 2013
Atlantic City Convention Center
Atlantic City, NJ
609.695.3481
www.njslom.org

New Jersey Green Expo

December 10-12, 2013
Trump Taj Mahal
Atlantic City, NJ
973.812.6467
www.njturfgrass.org

STMA Conference & Exhibition

January 21-24, 2014
San Antonio, TX
800.323.3875
www.stma.org

2014 Rutgers NJAES OCPE Courses Organic Turfgrass Management

January 28, 2014

Two-Day Athletic Field Maintenance

February 12-13, 2014

Reducing Pesticide Inputs & Exploring Organic Options for Sports Turf

February 18, 2014

Baseball & Softball Skin Surface Selection & Management

February 25, 2014

Rutgers Cook Campus

New Brunswick, NJ

732.932.9271

www.cpe.rutgers.edu732.932.9271

www.cpe.rutgers.edu

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TALL FESCUE Varieties for New Jersey Sports Fields

Brown patch disease is capable of producing large (1 to 2-ft diameter) circular patches of damaged turf during periods of warm, humid weather and is the most problematic disease affecting tall fescue. Varieties and experimental selections are routinely evaluated for susceptibility to brown patch disease in NTEP trials.

Research conducted at Rutgers University on the 2006 National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) Tall Fescue Test has identified tall fescue varieties with better traffic tolerance, turfgrass quality, and lower brown patch susceptibility (<http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1186/tall-fescue-varieties-for-nj-sports-fields.asp>).

Purchasing Seed

Purchasing certified seed of tall fescue is strongly suggested. Certified seed is grown in fields inspected by a state-certifying agency for genetic purity and also meets standards for germination (viability) and freedom from weeds and other crop seeds.

Identifying the variety of seed in the container allows the buyer to select improved varieties having the genetic traits that are most important for high quality sports field playing surfaces. Conversely, use of poorly adapted varieties can result in extensive turf failure, which increases the likelihood of field downtime and costly repairs. Seed labels that do not identify varieties or report varieties as variety-not-stated (VNS) present a risk to the buyer because the turf quality of the seed is unknown.

Establishment of Tall Fescue

Tall fescue grows well in moderately well-drained and fertile soil of slight acidity (optimum pH of 6.5 to 6.7). Tall fescue is an excellent choice for low to medium maintenance sports fields where irrigation is either limited or not available. Drought tolerance of tall fescue depends on the turf being well-established, especially after the development of a deep extensive root system, which may take a full growing season. Good rooting will be achieved by proper soil preparation before seeding or sodding and adequate nitrogen fertilization and irrigation during the establishment year. Construction practices and other efforts that limit compaction of the soil will ensure drought tolerance of tall fescue.

Tall fescue lacks abundant rhizomes, which are necessary for aggressive lateral spreading; thus, Kentucky bluegrass is commonly mixed with tall fescue to increase the ability of the turf to spread laterally. The rhizomes of Kentucky bluegrass provide sod strength and facilitate a suitable harvest. Sod of tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass is readily available in New Jersey. Tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass seed mixtures should consist of two or more traffic tolerant turf type tall fescue varieties in combination with one or more Kentucky bluegrass varieties with the following standards (percentage by weight): 80-95% Tall fescue; 5-20% Kentucky bluegrass.

Because the seed size of Kentucky bluegrass is much smaller than tall fescue, mixtures that contain 90% tall fescue and 10% Kentucky bluegrass (by weight) have approximately an equal number of tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass seeds. Seed mixtures that are 80% tall fescue and 20% Kentucky bluegrass (by weight) are approximately 70% Kentucky bluegrass and 30% tall fescue (by seed count).

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