

QUACKGRASS (*Agropyron repens*)



Quackgrass is a persistent perennial grass which is sometimes called couchgrass. It reproduces both by seed and by the spreading of underground rootstocks. Believed to have been introduced into North America in the late 1830s, it has spread across the continent. It survives best as a cool-season grass. It does not flourish in the South.

All of the Northern States consider this weed a primary noxious plant because its seeds often contaminate other seed mixes. Quackgrass is found in cultivated fields, wastelands, and in lawns.

Stems of quackgrass are hollow and may grow to a height of 3 feet. Leaves are dark green and the lower leaf sheath is distinctly hairy. Others have sparse whitish fuzz on the upper side.

Seed heads of quackgrass resemble wheat. Flowering parts are borne on two sides of the terminal spike. The spike is 2 to 4 inches long. Each small spikelet bears 4 to 7 seeds.

Each seed is long and slender, spindle shaped, yellow brown, and enclosed in a chafflike glume. Each glume has a short point or awn and carries three to seven distinct nerves.

New quackgrass plants are produced at every joint on the underground stems or rhizomes. This habit makes quackgrass a difficult species to control.

Sodium chlorate is a soil sterilant which will kill quackgrass and is used only for isolated patches. TCA (trichloroacetic acid) may also be used.

Dalapon and amitrol are used as foliage sprays for quackgrass control and are especially effective if combined with cultivation. Simazine, atrazine, and diuron at 4 to 10 lbs. per acre give good control. These chemicals give a short-term soil sterilization.

Prepared in cooperation with Crops Research Division, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland.

(DRAWING FROM NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL PUBLICATION NO. 36, USDA EXTENSION SERVICE)

Organic Fertilizers Prevent Burn on Bermudagrass Turf

To prevent fertilizer burn on tender turfgrasses, agronomists W. R. Thompson and C. Y. Ward of the Mississippi State Experiment Station, State College, suggest use of organic fertilizer sources in a release (Information Sheet 839) issued earlier this year.

Organic sources of nitrogen and other nutrients provide longer lasting supply with less danger of fertilizer burn than if a soluble nitrogen source is carelessly used, the researchers assert.

Tests were conducted in 1962 and 1963 on Bermudagrass plots (Tifgreen and Tiffine) which were managed under lawn conditions (mowed at 1 inch).

Three nitrogen sources were tested, cottonseed meal (6.6-2.5-1.8 analysis), activated sludge, and ammonium nitrate (a soluble nitrogen source).

Results of the tests showed that an 8-lb.-per-1,000-sq.-ft. nitrogen rate for all three sources is better than a 4-lb. rate. Turf developed disease symptoms with all three sources at the 4-lb. rate.

Bimonthly applications of fertilizer were classed as superior as compared with seasonal and monthly applications. Bimonthly applications held high turf quality throughout the growing season.

Cottonseed meal, a competitively proved product in southern states, compared favorably with sewage sludge and the liquid ammonium nitrate on its ability to supply needed nitrogen. None of the three caused turf damage upon application, the report states. All three treatments were washed into the soil with irrigation immediately following application.

Northwest Applicators to Meet

The first conference of the Northwest Chemical Applicators Association is scheduled to be held Nov. 30-Dec. 1, Chinook Hotel, Yakima, Wash.

Complete details of the event will be given in the October issue.