

Conference Panelists



H. E. Kaerwer, Northrup King & Co.; Doyle Jacklin, Jacklin Seed Co.; Ben Warren, Warren's Turf Nurseries; Laurel Meade, Agricultural Alumni Seed Improvement Association.

varieties. Research data, Florence said, have consistently rated Windsor superior in (1) disease resistance, including the common bluegrass diseases such as leaf spot, rust, dollar spot and striped smut; (2) drought tolerance; (3) color; (4) turf density; (5) texture; (6) close mowing, performing well at clipping heights as low as $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch; and (7) chemical tolerance, including the phenoxy herbicides, the mercurial fungicides and the chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides.

In 1960, Florence stated, Scotts offered contracts to professional seed producers in the Pacific Northwest to produce Windsor seed. These producers were, and still are, paid a premium for seed meeting the contractual specifications.

Limited quantities of Windsor seed became available and test marketing at retail was initiated in 1962 under Scotts brand, "Gold Label Classic," a bluegrass blend. As the seed producers increased their acreage and yields, Windsor was marketed in a broader geographic area and in several additional Scott brands including pure variety.

The market place, Florence stated, determines the success of any new product. Last year, he said, Scotts spent several million dollars promoting lawn products to the consumer in the United States and in Europe. Windsor was an integral part of that program and as a result, sold over 3 million pounds of Windsor bluegrass seed in 1968. Windsor bluegrass was made available to the professional sod producer for the first time in 1964.

Scotts has developed a sod grower licensing program designed to

support the professional sod grower with technological assistance in production and marketing. The licensed grower is provided marketing assistance thru his co-op advertising fund, designed to broaden the Windsor market, and stimulate the sod market in general. Selling aids, Florence pointed out, include signs, banners and promotional literature.

Sodco

Sodco is a new dwarf variety of bluegrass developed at Purdue University. It was discussed by Laurel Meade, Agricultural Alumni Seed Improvement Association, West Lafayette, Ind., the organization which will promote and develop the variety in the market.

Meade said that the Foundation group owns and operates 500 acres of land in the area and also has a research farm in Florida. Foundation seed for Sodco was made with a trial University planting in the fall of 1968. A few thousand pounds were produced, he said, and will be expanded as rapidly as possible. The Purdue Research Foundation has applied for a patent for the new variety and has assigned distribution rights to the Association. Meade said that this latter group is working under a contract with Western seed producers to produce seed.

Sodco, according to Meade, grows slowly and low. It is resistant to striped smut. Leaf nodes are close together and the leaf blades have a horizontal growth habit. Whereas common bluegrass varieties are cut at one and a half to 2-inch heights, Sodco may be cut three-quarters of an inch to an inch in height, Meade said. This can bring

about a "manicured" look to lawns. Because it does not have to be cut frequently, thatch is reduced. However, Meade stated, there are some shortcomings. Sodco is not designed to withstand heavy play use or traffic. It is more a "picturebook" grass. It will do best, Meade believes, on front lawns with little traffic and on golf course fairways which receive excellent care and management. Sodco has been tested at several state agricultural experiment stations in the United States.

Warren's A-20 Bluegrass Has Five-Year Guarantee

Warren's Turf Nurseries recently announced that its new disease-resistant bluegrass, A-20, is guaranteed to grow within five years of the date of planting. The sod, however, must be planted and maintained in accordance with instructions specified by the company, according to Robert Warren.

The new bluegrass has proved to be rust and mildew resistant, as well as resistant to stripe smut and leaf-spot, says Warren. Its thick growth retards weed invasion, the firm contends. A-20 will survive close mowing to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch and is therefore good for home putting greens and croquet courts, says Warren.

Dark green in color, A-20 Bluegrass makes a dense carpet-like turf but does not develop thatch as readily as most bluegrasses, the company says.

A-20 must be planted from sod or plugs; it is not available as seed. It is not guaranteed against damage by insects or traffic.