

1982 HARVEST REPORT

SEED GROWERS SEE RECOVERY IN DISTRIBUTORS RESTOCKING

By BRUCE F. SHANK

Major gains toward economic recovery may encourage seed distributors to replenish inventories this fall says Mike Robinson, marketing director of Pickseed West in Tengt, Oregon. This restocking may turn a potential oversupply situation into one of spot shortages for many turf seed varieties except Kentucky bluegrass.

"This year has been harder than usual," says Walt Pemrick of Warren's Turf Nurseries. "The East and West Coasts have held up well, but the Midwest has suffered since it is so closely tied to industry. Seed sales overall have been down and prices of some varieties have been depressed, but things are starting to look up."

The 1982 crop of Kentucky bluegrass seed was in the bumper cate-

gory. Some growers had carryover and distributors were buying conservatively. "Falling sod sales due to decreased construction and the growing acceptance of perennial ryegrasses have reduced the demand for many Kentucky bluegrasses," says Jay Glatt of Turf Seed, Hubbard, Oregon.

Robinson reported seed sales to Northeastern sod growers are strong, in fact, the growers have been more inclined to use improved, faster establishing varieties of Kentucky bluegrass. For this reason, and others, common Kentucky bluegrass faces the toughest oversupply problem.

Rains in early July cut production levels of some early maturing perennial ryegrasses by 15 to 20 percent. Tall fescues were hurt the

hardest with reductions of 25 percent or more. Most tall fescues are in a building situation, from small acreage to large production acreage. Setbacks in one year slow down production increases for the coming years.

A drop in highway construction is also affecting sales, according to Larry Vetter of Northrup King Co. Vetter and Robinson reported steady sales of overseeding blends for southern winter overseeding and northern year-round overseeding. Perennial ryegrasses are replacing Kentucky bluegrasses in northern overseeding programs says Robinson.

Doyle Jacklin of Jacklin Seed Co., Post Falls, Idaho, and George Horn of O.M. Scott & Sons, Marys-

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TABLE 1.
Kentucky Bluegrass Production, 1982.

Variety	Production	Variety	Production
Adelphi	ample	Haga	ample
America	ample	Merion	excellent
Aquila	limited	Merit	ample
A-34 (Bensun)	ample	Mystic	ample
Banff	ample	Nassau	limited
Baron	excellent	Newport	excellent
Bayside	limited	Nugget	limited to ample
Birka	ample	Parade	excellent
Bonnieblue	ample	Park	ample
Bristol	ample	Ram I	excellent
Cheri	excellent	Rugby	excellent
Columbia	ample	Shasta	ample
Eclipse	excellent	Sydsport	ample
Enmundi	limited	Touchdown	ample
Fylking	excellent	Vantage	ample
Glade	excellent	Victa	ample
Georgetown	limited	Wabash	excellent

TABLE 2.
Common Bluegrass Production, 1982.

Variety	Production
Common	excellent
Geary	excellent
Park	excellent
S-21	excellent
South Dakota	excellent
Troy	excellent

ville, Ohio, said retail sales of turf seed were also off this year. Vetter said agricultural seed sales have seen better days too. No one is denying that this year is a tough one, but they do separate turf seed pricing from agricultural or commodity seed pricing. Good inventories do not necessarily mean lower prices.

Robinson said it best, "If the economy is turning around and

distributors are starting to feel confident enough to restore their inventories, then many varieties of turf seed could be limited by next fall. Bluegrasses may take longer than one year to experience spot shortages, but one year can swing inventory levels from large to very small."

Late maturing crops such as bentgrasses, some fine fescues, and some perennial ryegrasses were helped by July rains according to Robinson. Supplies should be good for this fall.

It's safe to say that a few weeks ago some seed growers lost some sleep. Dropping interest rates indicate recovery is in sight, even though a six-month or more delay after construction recovers is expected. Seed growers may take new product development a little slower in the future and this may be more in line with product acceptance by the professional and retail seed buyer.

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TABLE 3.
Perennial Ryegrass, Production, 1982.

Variety	Production	Variety	Production
Allstar	sold out	Goalie	ample
Barry	ample	Jackpot	excellent
Belle	limited	Loretta	ample
Birdie	ample	Manhattan I	ample
Blazer	ample	Manhattan II	limited
Caravelle	ample	NK-200	ample
Citation	excellent	Omega	ample
Dasher	ample	Palmer	limited
Delray	excellent	Pennant	ample
Derby	ample	Pennfine	excellent
Diplomat	ample	Prelude	excellent
Eton	limited	Regal	ample
Elka	excellent	Yorktown I	limited
Fiesta	ample	Yorktown II	excellent

TABLE 4.
Fescue Production, 1982.

Chewings Fescues		Fall Fescues Cont.	
Variety	Production	Variety	Production
Agram	ample	Falcon	limited
Atlanta	excellent	Hounddog	limited
Banner	ample	Galway	limited
Barfalla	ample	Mustang	available in '83
Checker	ample	Olympic	limited
Highlight	ample	Rebel	ample
Jamestown	excellent		
Koket	ample		
Shadow	ample		
Creeping Red Fescues		Hard Fescue	
Variety	Production	Variety	Production
Dawson	limited	Aurora	limited
Ensylva	ample	Biljart	limited
Fortress	ample	Durar	excellent
Ruby	excellent	Reliant	limited
		Scaldis	ample
		Tournament	limited
		Waldina	ample
Tall Fescue		Sheep Fescues	
Variety	Production	Variety	Production
Clemfine	ample	Covar	excellent

TABLE 5.
Overseeding Blend Production, 1982.

Brand Name	Production
CBS (Turfseed, Lakeshore)	ample
Dixie Green (International)	ample
Futura Plus (Pickseed)	ample
Medalist (Northrup King)	ample
PHD (International)	ample
Showboat (International)	ample
Winter I (Scotts)	ample
Winter III (Scotts)	ample

TABLE 6.
Bentgrass Production, 1982.

Variety	Production
Bardot Colonial	limited
Emerald	ample
Exeter Colonial	ample
Kingstown Velvet	available in '83
Pennncross	ample
Penneagle	ample
Seaside	ample
Other Production	
Fults Pucinella distans	ample
Reubens	excellent