

# SO DEM

Seed harvests are up fr  
demand will keep sup  
existent,

by Jeff Sobul, and

**T**o use Frank Sinatra's words: it was a very good year.

The grass seed harvest of 1988 will be remembered as one in which everything went like clockwork—a bit late, but nonetheless like clockwork. Almost all yields were higher than 1987, especially those of perennial ryegrass.

"We're expecting to have enough seed to meet early-anticipated demand," says Kent Wiley of Pickseed West—emphasis on "early."

Which means that, if you're reading this report now and are still thinking about buying seed, you might have to leave it at just thinking. Because there probably won't be any seed to buy.

The green industry is just too demanding. "We're going to have our biggest year ever," says Tom Stanley of Turf Seed, "but it's still not going to meet demand."

Notes Wiley: "There is increased cleaning capacity and new warehousing in the valley as seed growers respond to increasing customer needs." Pickseed itself has increased its facility by 10,000 sq. ft. and added a new loading area. Also, new processing equipment from Germany is boosting Jacklin Seed's already massive and efficient facility.

"The demand for bluegrass is up tremendously," notes a befuddled Gayle Jacklin-Ward of Jacklin Seed, the largest marketer of bluegrasses in the world. "I don't know where it's going."

"It's been a fairly good harvest," says Rich Underwood of International Seeds, "but it won't be able to take care of the demand. We expect a basic tightness on most

**Despite a good harvest, distributors anticipate having trouble meeting demand this year. As a result, 10 to 15 percent price increases are expected.**



# ANDING

## GRASS SEED AVAILABILITY CHART

Availability Key: **A**-surplus **B**-adequate **C**-limited **T**-testing only **S**-sold out

om 1987. But escalating  
plies short, if not non-  
into 1989.

Jerry Roche, editor

turfgrasses, with higher prices."

A number of factors continue to drive up demand for grass seed, both proprietary and common. The one that's been in the news everywhere is of course, the Great Drought of 1988, which hit the grass-rich Midwest especially hard.

Lawn care operators may have been hit hard from the drought during the summer, but many of them will make up lost business through lawn renovations this fall (or next spring, if the seed isn't available yet). This should account for added pressure for blues, ryegrasses and tall fescues, among others.

### All-purpose turf

Especially tall fescues. Their drought tolerant reputation has boosted popularity greatly. Tall fescue demand is also up, say several sources, because it is adapting well to climates further north than ever before. As far north as Canada, in some cases. Use is even spreading to golf course roughs in some locations, notes Pickseed's Wiley.

According to Steve Tubbs of Turf Merchants, demand for the perennial ryegrasses has increased as well, so the seed growers have responded by planting upwards of 90,000 acres of it, compared with 50,000 acres just two years ago.

"There are some good yields of perennial ryegrasses," Wiley adds. "Overall, they're up 10 to 15 percent." Pickseed added improved varieties of three popular ryegrasses to help meet the demand this year: Fiesta II, Blazer II and Dasher II.

### Bluegrasses

Kenny Rogers' gambler just wants to break even "when the day is done." Seed growers and marketers are gamblers, and it seems that the bluegrass gamblers broke even this year.

VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY	VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
<b>Bentgrass (Creeping unless otherwise noted.)</b>					
Cobra	International	B	Pennlinks	Tee-2-Green	C
Emerald	International	B	Pennway	Tee-2-Green	C
Exeter	Colonial	C	Providence	Seed Research	C
	Pickseed		Putter	Jacklin	T
Kesk Oy	Daehnfeldt		SR-1020	Seed Research	B
	Export		Southshore	Lofts	T
Kingstown	Velvet Pickseed	C	Spectrum Blend	Turf Merchants	B
Penncross	Northrup King	B	Spectrum		
	Tee-2-Green	C	V.I.P. Blend	Turf Merchants	B
Penneagle	Tee-2-Green	C			

### Kentucky Bluegrass

A-34 BenSun	Warren's	C	Gnome	Turf Merchants/	B
Abbey	O.M. Scott	B	Jon. Green		
Adelphi	Jacklin/	C/B	Haga	Burlingham	S
	Northrup King		Harmony	Seed Research	B
Alpine	Pickseed	C	Huntsville	Jacklin	B
Amazon	Jacklin	C	Ikone	International	C
America	Pickseed	B	Julia	Lesco	B
Aspen	Northrup King	B	Liberty	Garfield Williamson	B
Banff	Pickseed	B	Lofts	1757 Lofts	C
Baron	Lofts	B	Majestic	Burlingham	S
Blacksburg	Turf Seed	C	Merion	Jacklin	B
Bristol	O.M. Scott	C	Midnight	Turf Seed	B
Bronco	Pickseed	C	Minstrel	Van Der Have	C
Challenge	Turf Seed	B	Mystic	Lofts	C
Chateau	Ampac/Fine	C	Nassau	Lofts/Jacklin	B
	Lawn Res.		Nugget	Jacklin/Pickseed	B/C
Cheri	Jacklin/Olsen-	B/C	P-104	Lofts	C
	Fennell		(Princeton)		
Classic	Jacklin	B	Parade	Northrup King	B
Columbia	Turf Seed	B	Ram I	Lofts/Jacklin	C
Coventry	O.M. Scott	B	Rugby	Northrup King	B
Cynthia	Van Der Have	C	Sophia	Van Der Have	B
Dawn	Lesco	B	Suffolk	Jacklin	C
Destiny	Jonathan Green	B	Sydsport	Burlingham/Jon.	S/C
Eclipse	Jacklin/Gfid.	C		Green	
	Williamson		Tendos	Turf Merchants	C
Emmundi	Seed Research/	C	Touchdown	Pickseed	B
	Jon. Green		Trampas	Daehnfeldt	C
			Trenton	Northrup King	B
Estate	Roberts	C	True	Blue Turf	
Freedom	Jacklin	C		Merchants	B
Fyking	Jacklin	B	Twilight	Turf Merchants	C
Georgetown	Lofts	C	Victa	O.M. Scott	B
Glade	Jacklin	B	Wabash	Jacklin	B

### Rough Bluegrass

Colt	Pickseed	B	Sabre	International	A
Laser poa	Lofts	C			
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### Common Bluegrass

Argyle	Olsen-Fennel	B	S-21	Jacklin	A
Kenblue	Jacklin/Olsen-	B	South Dakota	Jacklin	A
	Fennel		Troy	Jacklin	A
Newport	Jacklin/Olsen-	B/C			
	Fennel				
Park	Jacklin	B			

### Turf-Type Tall Fescue

Adventure	Warren's	C	Mustang	Pickseed	B
Apache	Turf Seed	B	Olympic	Turf Seed	B
Arid	Jacklin/Olsen-	C	Pacer	International	B
	Fennel		Rebel	Lofts	C
Bonanza	Olsen-Fennel/	C	Rebel II	Lofts	B
	Proprietary		Rebel Jr.	Lofts	T
Bonsai Dwarf	Turf Merchants	C	Richmond	Jonathan Green	B
Chesapeake	O.M. Scott	C	Survivor Blend	Seed Research	B
Chieftan	Roberts	C	Tampo	Normarc	C
Cimarron	Lesco	B	Thoroughbred	Pickseed	B
Clemfine	Lofts	B	Titan Seed	Seed Research	B
Emperor	Garfield	C	Trailblazer	Lesco	B
	Williamson		Transition Blend	Lesco	B
Falcon	Olsen-Fennel/	C/S	Triathalawn	Turf Seed	B
	Burlingham		Blend		
			Tribute	Lofts	C

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A bluegrass surplus will ease one of the growing concerns in the industry: lack of land. Growers were eating up large tracts of farmland at a swift pace to boost yield amounts to meet demand.

The crop was an average one, which is to say it was pretty good since recent crops had been well below average. Jacklin-Ward notes that high yielding varieties yielded even higher than normal this year while lower yielding ones were below normal. Break-even.

Turf Merchants' Tubbs adds, "Our stuff is doing just phenomenal this year. We've had 2,500 to 2,600 pounds per acre yield of Gnome when the average is about 1,200 pounds per acre."

However, common varieties did poorly this year, down 30 percent despite increased acres, Jacklin-Ward says. Pickseed's Wiley is even less optimistic. "Some estimates are one-half of last year," he says.

### What's a surplus?

There is good news, though. Many of the marketers are predicting a surplus soon, perhaps next year. Jacklin-Ward is one. After a number of years of com-

VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY	VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
<b>Turf-Type Tall Fescue</b>					
Finelawn I	Ampac/Fine Lawn Res.	C/B	Mojave	Olsen-Fennel	C
Finelawn SGL	Fine Lawn Res.	C	Monarch	Turf Seed	C
Galway	Northrup King	B	Trident	Ampac/Seed Research	C/B
Houndog	International	B	Trophy Blend	Seed Research	B
Jaguar	Garfield	B-C	Turfgem II Blend	Turf Merchants	C
Jaguar II	Williamson	C	TurfMates Blend	Turf Merchants	C
Maverick	Garfield	C	Wrangler	Lesco/Jacklin/Turf Merchants	C
Mesa	Williamson	B			
	Pickseed	C			
	Jonathan Green	B			

### Fine Fescues:

#### Chewings Fescue

Agram	Pickseed	B	Shadow	Turf Seed	B
Allaire	Jonathan Green	B	Sherwood	Jonathan Green	B
Allanta	Van Der Have	B	Victory	Pickseed	B
Banner	O.M. Scott	B	Waldorf	Van Der Have	B
Cascade	Olsen-Fennel	C	Creeping	Red Fescue	
Enjoy	International	B	Cindy	International	C
Ensyva	International	B	Dawson	Northrup King/Van Der Have	B
Epsom	Van Der Have	C	Flyer	Turf Seed	C
Estacada	Turf Merchants	C	Fortress	Turf Seed	C
Jamestown	Lofts	B	Jasper	Pickseed	C
Jamestown II	Lofts	T	Pennlawn	Olsen-Fennel	B
Koket	Burlingham	C	Ranier	Olsen-Fennel	B
Longfellow	International	C	Ruby	Northrup King/Van Der Have	B
Mary	Van Der Have	C	Shademaster	Lesco	C
Puma	Daehnfeltd	C	Virtus	Turf Merchants	C
Scarlet	Van Der Have	B			

### Hard Fescue

Attila	Turf Merchants	C	Spartan	Pickseed	B
Aurora	Turf Seed	B	SR-3000	Seed Research	B
Reliant	Lofts	B	Tournament	Pickseed	C
Scaldis	Northrup King	B	Waldina	Turf Seed	C

### Sheep Fescue

Azay	Pickseed	C	Bighorn	Turf Seed	C
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Distributors hope a surplus of bluegrass will help ease the problem of reduced acreage in the Willamette Valley, Washington and Idaho.

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VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY	VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
<b>Perennial Ryegrass</b>					
Accolade	O.M. Scott	C	Nova	Seed Research	C
Allaire	Turf Merchants	A	Omega II	Turf Seed/Gfld.	B
All*Star	Ampac/ International	C	Ovation	O.M. Scott	B
Jacklin		B	Palmer	Lofts	B
Aquarius	Turf Merchants	C	Patriot	Turf Merchants	A
Barry	Turf Merchants	C	Pennant	Olsen-Fennel/ Burlingham	B/S
Belle	Burlingham	S	Pennfine	Olsen-Fennel/ Turf Merchants	C
Birdie II	Turf Seed	B	Northrup	King	B
Blazer	Pickseed	B	Pinnacle	Normarc	C
Blazer II	Pickseed	C	Pleasure	Ampac	C
Brenda	Van Der Have	B	Plus	Olsen-Fennel	B
Caddle	Northrup King	C	Polly	Daehnfeldt	A
Calypso	Roberts	C	Prelude	Lofts	B
Caravelle	O.M. Scott	B	Premier	Normarc	C
Citation II	Turf Seed	B	Prestige	Olsen-Fennel	C
Commander	Lesco	B	Ranger	Van Der Have	C
Cowboy	Lofts	C	Regal	International	A
Crusader	Turf Merchants	C	Regency	Lesco	B
creeping			Repell	Lofts	C
Dandy	Bailey	B	Rodeo	Turf Merchants	A
Dasher	Pickseed	C	Sheriff	Van Der Have	C
Dasher II	Pickseed	B	SR-4000	Seed Research	B
Delray	Northrup King	B	SR-4100	Seed Research	B
Derby	International	A	Saturn	Turf Seed/Gfld.	C
Diplomat	Lofts	C	Signature	Williamson	
Elka	International	B	Stallion	Lesco	C
Fiesta	Pickseed	B		Turf Merchants/ Fine Lawn	C
Fiesta II	Pickseed	B	Sundance	Roberts	C
Gator	International	A	246 Sunrye	Turf Seed	C
Goalie	Northrup King	C	Tara	Ampac	C-B
Jazz	Pickseed	B	Troubadore	International	C
Lindsay	International	C	Vantage	Proprietary Seeds	T
Loretta	O.M. Scott	B	Vintage 2df	Lesco	B
Manhattan II	Turf Seed/ Turf Merchants	B/C	Yorktown	Lofts	C
Mondial	Van Der Have	B			
NK200	Northrup King	C			
<b>Annual Ryegrass</b>					
Dallia	Daehnfeldt	A	Gulf	Olsen-Fennel	B
<b>Winter Overseeding Blends</b>					
CBS II	Perennial Ryegrass Blend Turf Seed	B	Medalist 400 + Sabre	Northrup King	A
Champion Seed	Research	B	Par Blend	Lesco	B
Dixie Green	International	A	Ph.D.	International	A
Dixie Green + Sabre	International	A	Ph.D. + Sabre	International	A
Double Eagle	Lesco	B	Pin-Hi	Ampac	C
Blend	Lesco	B	Playmate	Roberts	C
Eagle Blend	Pickseed	B	Proform Triple Classic	Garfield Williamson	B
Futura Plus	Pickseed	B	Quartet Rye Blend	Van Der Have	B
Futura 2000	rye blend	B	Spectrum Rye	Turf Merchants	B
Magnum	Proprietary Seeds		Symphony	Burlingham	S
Marvelgreen	Lofts	B	Tara-Green	Ampac	C
Supreme			Transtar	Lesco	B
Marvelgreen	Lofts	B	Triple Play Rye	Fine Lawn Res.	B
3 + 1			Trylogy	Burlingham	S
Marvelgreen + Laser	Lofts	B	V.I.P. Rye	Turf Merchants	B
Marvelgreen	Lofts	B	Vintage Plus	Lesco	B
Classic			Winter Turf I	O.M. Scott	B
Medalist 5	Northrup King	B	Winter Turf III	O.M. Scott	B
Medalist 6	Northrup King	C	Winter Turf V	O.M. Scott	B
Medalist 7	Northrup King	B	Winter Turf IX	O.M. Scott	C
Medalist 7 + Sabre	Northrup King	A			
Medalist 300	Northrup King	A			
Medalist 400	Northrup King	A			
<b>Other</b>					
Certified	Jacklin	B	Medalist Permanent		
Streaker red top			Turf Blends and Mixtures	(15 total) Northrup King	B
Crusader	Seed Research	B	Pinto	Lofts	B
Ryegrass-hard			Wildflowers		
Fescue Mix			Reubens	Jacklin	B
Four Star Sod Blend	Jacklin	C	Canada Bluegrass		

Some new varieties expected to hit the market this year: Providence bentgrass, Alpine bluegrass, Bonsai dwarf turf-type tall fescue and Cobra bentgrass.

pletely sold out bluegrasses, she sees a surplus for 1989 (if the weather holds, of course). "I anticipate next year we'll have to learn how to sell again," she says happily. In recent years the company has had to turn away prospective customers because there wasn't anything to sell them.

Turf Seed's Stanley is anticipating a surplus in "one to two years." Mike Robinson of Seed Research is even predicting a surplus of bluegrasses this year "because there's more interest in turf-type tall fescues and ryegrasses."

Whenever it happens, a bluegrass surplus will ease one of the growing concerns in the industry: lack of land. Growers were eating up large tracts of farmland at a swift pace to boost yield amounts to meet demand.

"We're starting to run out of this big bank of acreage," Wiley explains. "It's gotten much tougher now. The northern end of the Willamette Valley (where most of the ryes and tall fescues are grown) is competing with the grain markets for acreage. It'll be hard to get acreages of turfgrass because of the (higher) prices of wheat."

Farmers, who are businessmen, too, see more profits in growing the higher priced wheat. Consequently, there is less room for grass. Similar problems exist in the bluegrass belt of Idaho and Washington, Jacklin-Ward confirmed.

## New wave

This reduced acreage availability hasn't stemmed the tide of new varieties. In addition to Pickseed's ryes, a plethora of new varieties were expected to hit the market this year, including Providence bentgrass (formerly SR 1019) from Seed Research, Alpine bluegrass from Pickseed West, Bonsai dwarf turf-type tall fescue from Turf Merchants and Cobra bentgrass from International Seeds. Turf Seed is planning on releasing a Silverado-Eldorado-Monarch blend in 1989—the first dwarf turf-type tall fescue blend ever. **LM**