

Compound controls unwanted tall fescue

A new compound developed through research at Iowa State University selectively controls tall fescue in a number of established grasses.

The compound, chlorsulfuron, is a product of E.I. Du Pont de Nemours marketed by Lesco as Lesco TFC. The dispersible granular herbicide is labeled for established Kentucky bluegrass, fine fescue, bentgrass, bahiagrass and Bermudagrass.

Tests on annual bluegrass tolerance were inconclusive, in one instance showing tolerance, and in another showing damage, according to Nick Christians, Ph.D., Iowa State. The product will kill perennial ryegrass.

The compound was originally tested as a low-use-rate broadleaf weed controller. But it also discolored tall fescue contaminating Kentucky bluegrass plots, leading to tests to control tall fescue by Christians and D.J. Laroque at Iowa State in 1982 and 1983.

Greenhouse trials showed chlorsulfuron's effect on tall fescue was slow, taking four weeks to show signs of damage, eight for complete kill. The compound was also effective in fall



uses even when the tall fescue went into dormancy.

PRODUCTS

Carpet produces lightweight sod

Fast Grass, Inc. is trying to take some of the backache out of laying sod.

The Oxnard, Calif., company purchased the rights to manufacture and distribute a jute and hemp carpet in-laid with grass seed at the factory. When rolled out on plastic and watered, the carpet produces a saleable stand of turf in about 45 days. Without dirt.

The carpet, developed and tested successfully in Europe, weighs about 70 pounds in a four- by 100-foot roll. When the turf is grown, the roll is cut into 25-foot sections for easy handling by one person. This is considerably less burdensome than the average roll of conventional sod.

Because of this, the owners of Fast Grass—Doug Cowle and Evan Melby—are hoping to sell the product to sod farmers, landscapers and even homeowners. They see a day when the homeowner can go into the supermarket, buy a 50-square-foot roll and grow it themselves to replace dead spots. The carpet could also have a home on golf courses and in areas requiring erosion control.

The two men estimate the cost of the carpet will be about the same as dirt-grown sod, but that the carpet can lead to savings in labor and water costs. Large harvesting equipment won't be needed, and less water is

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