

# New seed varieties show some resistance

**CLEVELAND**—The green industry's leading seed companies have reported to **LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT** the release of at least 10 new varieties. Most will have limited availability in their first year.

- Lesco's Trailblazer II is a dwarf, dark green variety of turf-type tall fescue, available in limited supply for fall 1991. Trailblazer II has reportedly shown excellent resistance to leaf spot, crown rot, brown patch as well as producing good cold, wear and shade tolerance and excellent drought tolerance.

- New tall fescue varieties from Turf Seed are Eldorado, Tomahawk and Safari. But Dr. Bill Meyer of Turf Seed says the company is being cautious when it comes to new varieties. "There's less demand for new varieties than there was a few years ago," says Meyer, "so we're being very selective about what we're putting our name on."

- Winchester and Thunderbird are two new semi-dwarf varieties. Both are reported to have "excellent" disease resistance, especially to brown patch.

- Turf Merchants will most likely develop a "mini" Bonsai variety, says researcher Fred Ledeboer, who adds that he has had success in developing a Bonsai plant with endophytes. Ledeboer says even shorter-growing tall fescues are on the horizon, varieties that will attain a maximum height of about two feet.

- Legacy dwarf turf-type perennial ryegrass exhibits low growth habit, fine texture and very dark green color. A 94 percent endophyte level, providing resistance to above ground feeding insects. Legacy is demonstrating high performance in all turfgrass tests under low as well as high



**Doug Brede: Says industry may see a hybrid bentgrass by mid-decade, for home lawns in the North. It would also be better suited to Southern heat.**

maintenance levels.

- Edge ryegrass, says Pickseed West's Dr. Jerry Pepin, has 100 percent endophyte. It can be used in blends and mixes.

"We're looking for low-growing ryegrasses, too," says Pepin. "They seem to produce more growth. Ryegrass will be our biggest species because there are so many uses for them. Low-growing is less maintenance, less fertilizer, less water..."

Shamrock, a new hybrid Kentucky bluegrass, exhibits improved disease tolerance, dark

green genetic color, very dense fine turf with a relatively low growth habit, and improved resistance to leaf spot and rust.

- Doug Brede of Jacklin Seed Co.'s research division reports that J-386 Kentucky bluegrass—now in the works—will be a "top variety." He is also at work on a hybrid bentgrass species for home lawns in the North. Some of these bunch-type grasses are "very acceptable" for low-maintenance grasses in the South. Brede promises a definite report on *Agrostis* by 1995.

- *Supra Poa supina* bluegrass is new to the U.S., reports Bill Junk of Fine Lawn Research, Inc. "It is the best shade species and number one sports grass in Europe," says Junk. *Supra* is described as especially thick, highly resistant to traffic and disease, with minimal growth.

- *Tropica bermudagrass* is new from Turf Merchants, as well as *Cypress Poa trivialis*.



**Fred Ledeboer: Tall fescues can tolerate some skips in fertilization, but don't take them for granted.**

*For a complete listing of the various seed marketers and brands, see our survey beginning on page 12. For an update on endophyte research, see our exclusive on page 26.*

# Plant bulbs now for spring flowers

**BROOKLYN HEIGHTS, N.Y.**—If you've got landscapes in which you want to incorporate flower bulbs for next spring, fall is the time for planting.

Good drainage is absolutely essential for spring bulbs, advises the Netherlands FlowerBulb Information Center, headquartered here.

Sandy soils are best, but if your soil is mostly clay, mix in some organic matter such as peat moss. The peat not only provides better drainage, but it also loosens the soil so the actual bulb planting is easier.

The basic rule of thumb to determine proper planting depth and spacing:

- Eight inches deep, three to 10 inches apart for large caliber bulbs (like tulips, narcissi and hyacinths) that are two inches or more in diameter.

- Five inches deep, spaced one to two inches apart for smaller bulbs (like crocus, grape hyacinth, scilla or galanthus) that are one inch or smaller in diameter.

After planting, it's important to water generously to get root growth started. For bed plantings, it's good to add two to three inches of mulch like pine park, once the ground freezes.

Bulbs should be planted before the first hard frost, which could be just around the corner. However, if you find yourself with unplanted bulbs after the cold weather has arrived, you can plant them anyway. They won't keep indoors: too much heat can kill them, too much moisture can cause rot or fungus.

But in the ground, they'll probably surprise you and flower come spring.



**Drifts of dewy daffodils come up each spring in no-fuss naturalized plantings if you can plant them before the first freeze sets in this fall.**