

Lock up seed purchases: higher prices on the horizon

BY RON HALL/
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SALEM, OR—If you're anticipating a lot of seeding work this fall and next season, consider buying your seed soon.

Unfavorable growing conditions in prime turf growing regions of the United States will cause seed prices to rise but there will be enough seed of almost all species and varieties to meet your needs. As of this writing you could still find perennial ryegrass seed at bargain prices due to a large carryover from the previous year's harvest, but that will change.

"We overdid a good thing," says Mike Baker, general manager at Pennington Seeds' Lebanon, OR, facility. "You have a good thing going and it's awfully hard to know when to slow down, but the market tells you — and it did."

"We're looking at a 15% reduction in

yield in perennial ryegrass," adds Don Herb, president and general manager of Ore Gro Seeds, Inc., Shedd, OR. "When we get into May and June of next spring there could be little carryover of any quality seed at all."

Herb says that a combination of a mild, dry winter and several days of 90°-plus weather this past May as grass plants were pollinating caused the short crop in some production fields in the Willamette Valley.

"It certainly seems like a good bit of the carryover is getting used up for early shipment," adds Pennington's Baker.

Prices of Oregon-grown turf-type tall fescue seed will be stable but will rise because of a shortfall in the K-31 tall fescue crop, most of which is grown in Missouri.

Drought affected the dryland production of common Kentucky bluegrass, too. Instead of the anticipated 130 million-lb.

crop, marketers are looking at a yield of about 105 to 110 million lbs. For this reason, prices on these commons, most of which are used in mixtures, will rise.

"But, the proprietary varieties, which are grown on irrigated ground, are in good supply," says Glenn Jacklin, Idaho/Washington Manager Jacklin Golf. "Inventories should be stable and the quality looks very good this year."

"Adequate" is the prediction for most varieties of bermudagrass seed as well, says Pennington Seed's Russ Nicholson.

The take-home message from this year's turf seed harvest is a simple one: "Take care of all of your needs for spring 2002, and get it locked up because we might see some strengthening in price," says Tom Stanley, Southwest Sales Manager, Turf-Seed, Inc., Hubbard, OR.

People & companies

Environmental Industries



Law

named **Richard Sperber** President and Chief Operating Officer. The company also named **John T. Law, Jr., Ph.D.**, Director of Technical Services for the West Coast, and **Andrew J. Mandell** senior vice president and chief financial officer.

Bozzuto Landscaping Co., Greenbelt, MD, promoted

Bruce Leonard to area manager and **Randy Abshier** to vice president. The company also hired **Tom Hopkins** as area manager.

Dow AgroSciences LLC appointed **Martin Posset** turf and ornamental product communications manager, **Beau Miller** turf and ornamental market research manager, **Dan Loughner** field biologist, **Kerry Avirett** Texas sales representative, **John**

Price Ohio sales rep, and **Ray Miller** Florida sales rep.

Aventis Environmental Science's Chipco Professional Products group named **Joseph Grippi** sales representative for western Michigan and northern Indiana and **Scott Parker** sales representative for southern Indiana, northern Kentucky and central Illinois.

Oregro Seeds hired **Hagen Ledebauer** as outside sales representative for the southwest.

The J. R. Simplot Company's Turf & Horticulture group

named **Steve Franzen** western region director of sales for its fertilizer division. **U.S. Lawns** added its 82nd franchise, U.S. Lawns of Simi Valley, CA.

Miramar Wholesale Nurseries



Smagacz

promoted **Kelley Smagacz** to purchasing manager and appointed **Debbie**

Binczewski controller.