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Circle No. 137 on Reader Inquiry Card OCTOBER 1989/LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT 31

## THE CLEAN-UP JOB: A MONTH-LONG PROJECT

After the U.S. Open finished and a light drizzle fell during the awards ceremony, Oak Hills superintendent Joe Hahn was faced with the challenge of putting the course back in shape—no small task.

The stakes and ropes were taken down within the first two days. Outside contractors had the tents down after a few days, and in two to three weeks the bleachers disappeared. The ropes, screening cloth and the wood used in the scoreboards will be sold to the Medinah Country Club, site of the 1990 Open, in the same manner they were acquired from The Country Club in Brookline, Mass., where the Open was held last year.

Member play was scheduled to resume the day after the Open—it was a day of sunshine so desired the week

before. Guests returned on June 27.

After the Open, the playing areas of the course were not the parts that needed the most attention. What did were the muddy grassless areas, the result of the thousands who had fought the elements for a glimpse of Strange, Kite, Beck, Woosnam and McCumber.

Hundreds of yards of wood chips had to be removed, along with many sheets of plywood that had been placed around the course to make the steep hills maneuverable and to protect the ground. The bare areas were aerified and overseeded; it took several weeks of cooperative weather for the areas under irrigation to get back in shape.

—Ann Reilly □

### US OPEN from page 28

On May 1 of this year, an outside contractor began putting up grandstands and tents. Hahn held his breath as the last bleacher was finished on Monday, the day before the first practice round. ABC started building its television towers on May 17.

#### An early start

Membership priorities were certainly infringed upon during the get-ready stages, but members actually missed only one day of play before the Open.

The maintenance crew, which totals 32 for the two courses at Oak Hill in normal years, was increased to 40 this year. An additional five-man swamper crew was hired to put up and take down ropes and stakes and to build scoreboards.

Eleven of Hahn's employees have or are working toward advanced degrees in turfgrass management. Rusty Madden is the assistant supervising the East Course, and assistant Joe Frank heads up the West Course.

#### Crunch time

A month before the Open, some members of the crew voluntarily began working 80-hour weeks. ("We let them decide," Hahn notes. "It wasn't mandatory.") Their days started at 6 or 7 a.m., 4:30 a.m. during the Open. Because of the weather problems during the Open, work often wasn't done until 10 p.m. The crew's available time to work was naturally limited, because once the crowds arrived and play started, there wasn't much they could do.

USGA tour agronomist Tim Morgan began visiting Oak Hill monthly during the summer of 1988. This year, he arrived on May 26 and,



**Joe Hahn says bad conditions would make superintendent-ing "old quick."**

working with Hahn, had a daily goal of insuring that the course was firm and fast.

Their game plan was to take Stimp-meter readings each morning after the greens were double-mowed and groomed, and from that determine what activities would take place in the afternoon: double-rolling for firmness or grooming for speed. Naturally, the schedule changed.

The plan was to cut fairways, approaches and tees every morning to  $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch, cut the greens every morning to  $\frac{7}{64}$ -inch and cut the intermediate rough every afternoon to two inches. Because of water on the course, the fairways were cut in the afternoon rather than in the morning. Fairways and greens were rolled more often than originally planned. The primary rough was cut on Monday before the practice rounds to a height of four inches and was not re-cut during the Open.

Players in the 1985 Senior Open

had expressed concern over the severity of the slope leading to a pond on the 15th green. Therefore, a retaining wall was built and the area leveled to make an unfair situation manageable. An improved tee was built on the fifth hole to lengthen the hole. The seventh tee was enlarged and the sixth tee leveled. The bunkers on No.5 were reconstructed: one was eliminated and the remaining two were converted to splash bunkers. Throughout the course, all of the bunker edges were restored.

#### Making it MEM

For the past three years, fairways were aerated five or six times each year, and lime was applied to reduce thatch. Two years ago, the crew began triplex mowing the fairways. Perennial ryegrass was introduced to the roughs, which were primarily bentgrass and *Poa annua* (a result of previously narrowed fairways). One objective over the past two years was to make the course firmer than for normal membership play.

Hahn, father of seven and a new grandfather, is in his seventh year as superintendent at Oak Hill. In all, he has 34 years of experience in golf course management. Surprisingly, he remained very calm and cool during the unexpected turn of events.

"You do everything you can," he explains. "I feel bad for my crew, which worked so hard to prepare the course and then had the weather turn that way." **LM**

Ann Reilly is a long-time contributor to Landscape Management. She is a freelance writer/photographer specializing in plant and wildlife topics with residence in Massapequa Park, N.Y.





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Circle No. 139 on Reader Inquiry Card



# THE HARVEST IS IN (...and pert' near gone!)

Seed producers' hopes for a harvest of plenty were altered by weather, lower production and strong demand.

by Terry McIver, associate editor

**A** Boy Scout would have a field day as a grass seed grower or marketer. He'd always have to "be prepared."

Heavy demand and fickle weather conditions contributed to a less-than-anticipated 1989 harvest for many seed varieties, most notably tall fescues.

Last year it was the drought. This year rain was plentiful, but at the wrong times.

"All the fescues are low," says **Doug Toews** of International Seeds. "The weather did it. We had the cold spell in December, then little rain, then lots of rain, and some more rain at harvest time. It was six of one, half-a-dozen of another."

---

*'The demand for tall fescue is as hot as ever! Industry-wide, it's been... spotty, production, increased demand and weather.'*

—Joe Churchill  
Northrup King

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Also, field burning was interrupted for several days in 1988 after the I-5 accident, and some think the interruption ultimately caught up with production.

## Tall fescues hardest hit

Turf-type tall fescues took a real beating this time around.

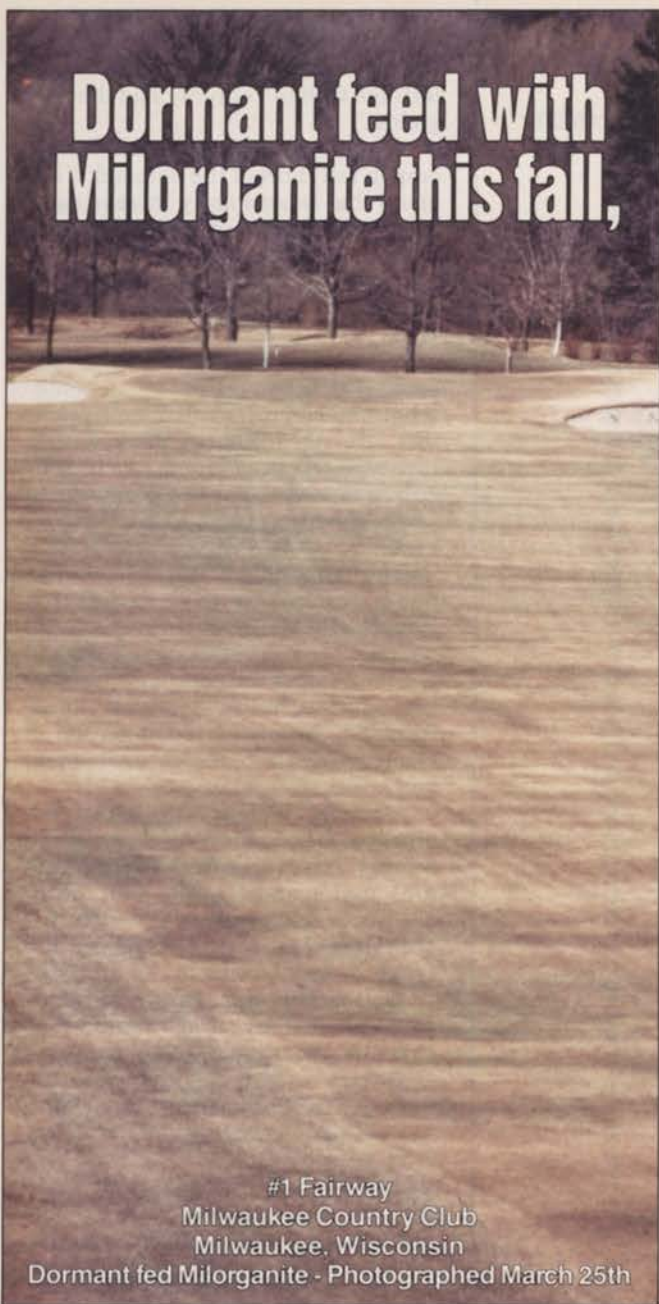
"We think it was a number of weather-related factors," says **Mike Robinson**, president of Seed Research of Oregon. "There was late rain in November, a late green-up, and then the cold weather in February. And after the cold spell, wet weather held up fertilizing in February."

Though fertilizing schedules might differ slightly among growers,





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## TURF-TYPE TALL FESCUE

VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
Adventure	Warren's	C
Apache	Turf Seed	B-
Arid	Jacklin/Olsen-Fennel/ Northrup King	B/C/B
Avanti	Warren's	C
Bonanza	Olsen-Fennel/Proprietary/ Van Der Have	C/C/C
Bonsai (dwarf)	Turf Merchants	C
Brookston	Turf Merchants	C
Chesapeake	O.M. Scott	B
Chieftan	Roberts	C
Cimarron	Lesco	B
Clemfline	Lofts Great Western	A
Cochise (dwarf)	Ampac	S
Crossfire	Pickseed	C
Emperor	Zajac Performance Seeds	C
Falcon	Olsen-Fennel/E.F. Burlingham	C/S
Finelawn I	Fine Lawn Research	C
Gala	International	C
Galway	Northrup King	C
Guardian	Roberts	C
Houndog	International	B-
Hubbard	Hubbard Seed & Supply	C
HRZ-18	Van Der Have	C
Jaguar	Zajac Performance Seeds	C
Jaguar II	Zajac Performance Seeds	C
Maverick	Pickseed	B
Maverick II	Pickseed	B
Mesa	Jonathan Green	B
Mojave	Olsen-Fennel	C
Monarch	Turf Seed	B-
Montauk	Jonathan Green	C
Murietta (dwarf)	Turf Seed	C
Mustang	Turf Seed	B-
Olympic	Turf Seed	B-
Pacer	International	B-
Potomac	Jonathan Green	C
Rebel	Lofts Great Western	B
Rebel II	Lofts Great Western	B
Rebel Jr.	Lofts Great Western	C
Richmond	Jonathan Green	B
Silverado (dwarf)	Turf Seed	C
Shortstop	Pickseed	C
Survivor (blend)	Seed Research	B
Sundance (dwarf)	Turf Merchants	C
Taurus (dwarf)	Turf Merchants	C
Team (blend)	Pickseed	B
Thoroughbred	Pickseed	B
Titan	Seed Research	B
Trailblazer	Lesco	B
Triathalawn (blend)	Turf Seed	B-
Tribute	Lofts Great Western	B
Trident	Seed Research/Ampac	B/S
Triple Pro (blend)	Northrup King	B
Trophy (blend)	Seed Research	B
Turfgem II (blend)	Turf Merchants	A
Turf Mates (dwarf blend)	Turf Merchants	C
Winchester	E.F. Burlingham & Sons	S
Wrangler	Lesco/Jacklin/Turf Merchants	C/C/C
SR 8200 (dwarf)	Seed Research	C

Robinson says those who were able to fertilize well in February had the best yields.

"We expect the 1989 tall fescue crop to fall short of the demand, a demand that is constantly increasing as users realize the advantage of turf-types over the older, forage-type tall fescues," says **Art Wick**, director of research and development for Lesco. Wick says grower costs have increased more than costs for the 1988 crop, which should reflect in somewhat higher professional user prices this fall. According to Wick, future turf-type tall fescue demand is difficult to measure, but Lesco expects to see a growing demand for several years.

The demand for tall fescues has been "as hot as ever," says **Joe Churchill** of Northrup King. "Some (of our) varieties in some areas have had winter damage in February. Galway was effected, but Arid is okay. Industry-wide, it's been a combination of spotty production, increased demand and weather."

"Our tall fescue supplies are adequate, but adequate isn't good enough," remarks **Gary Parker**, general manager of Lofts. Our older stands were primarily weak. It's weather related, fertilizer related... we don't have the answer."

On the plus side, Parker says new fields planted a year ago should help ease any pending shortages next year.

**Gayle Ward** of Jacklin Seed Co. finds the tall fescues very disappointing, with a 50 percent yield reduction. And **Tom Stanley** of Turf Seed sees many tall fescue yields as 30 to 50 percent short. The especially cold winter was something Stanley and others think may have been another negative factor.

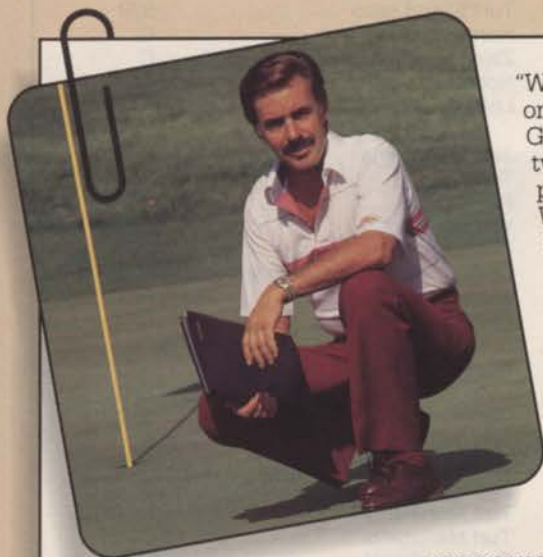
Add to that a heavy demand. "There are more certified production acres of tall fescue than perennial ryegrass in Oregon," says **Steve Tubbs**, vice president and general manager of Turf Merchants, Inc. However, demand for tall fescue is keeping supplies tight. "All tall fescues are yielding poorly due to reproductive tillers turning vegetative rather than producing seed heads," continues Tubbs, "and clean-outs are higher than expected due to empty florets."

"Regardless of demand, there is a virtual sell-out of all varieties at prices comparable to last year. In fact, it's the first time in history that the turf types have raised the price of Kentucky-31 as opposed to Kentucky-31 pulling the price of turf types down," says Tubbs.

Due to excellent demand for pe-



# BENTGRASS

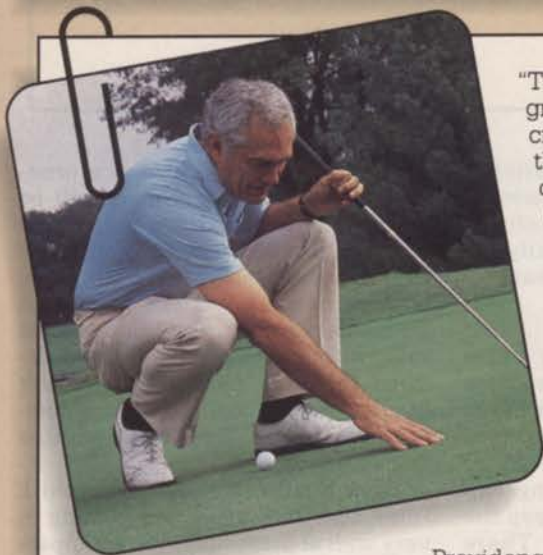


"We planted the 12th hole on Singing Hills' Willow Glen Course to SR 1020 two years ago, and it performed admirably. What's really significant is that members keep asking what we've done to the 12th hole that makes it putt so well! The members like SR 1020's performance from the players' point of view; we like that too, but we also value that we

haven't had to change our normal greens maintenance program to achieve the results."

*David Fleming*

David Fleming, C.G.C.S.  
Superintendent, Singing Hills Country Club  
El Cajon, CA



"The newer golf course greens planted to Penn-cross look beautiful, but they don't putt like the old South German Bent greens. The putting surface of those old greens is fine-textured, not thatchy or grainy, and the old greens don't show the spike marks like Penn-cross. We've been needing bent-grasses bred for golf quality as well as turf quality for a

long time, and it looks like SR 1020 and Providence fill the bill!"

*Pete Trenham*

Peter Trenham  
President, Philadelphia Section PGA  
St. David's Golf Club  
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## KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS

VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY	VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
A-34 Ben Sun	Waren's	C	Haga	E.F. Burlingham & Sons	B
Abbey	O.M. Scott	B	Harmony	Seed Research	B
Able 1	Warren's	C	Huntsville	Jacklin	B
Adelphi	Jacklin/Northrup King	C/C	Ikone	International	C
Alpine	Pickseed	B	Julia	Turf Seed/Lesco	B/B
Amazon	Jacklin	C	Kelly	Northrup King	C
America	Pickseed	B	Liberty	Zajac Performance Seeds	C
Aspen	Northrup King	B	Limousine	Roberts	C
Asset	Van Der Have	C	1757	Lofts Great Western	
Aquila	Northrup King	C			
Banff	Pickseed	B	Merion	Jacklin/Roberts	C/C
Baron	Lofts Great Western	B	Midnight	Turf Seed	C
Blacksburg	Turf Seed	C	Merit	Full Circle	B
Boston	Jonathan Green	C	Minstrel	Van Der Have	C
Bristol	O.M. Scott	B	Monopoly	Peterson	C
Bronco	Pickseed	B	Nassau	Lofts Great Western/Jacklin	B/B
Challenge	Turf Seed	B	Nugget	Jacklin/Pickseed	B/B
Chateau	Fine Lawn Research	B	P-104	Lofts Great Western	C
Cheri	Olsen Fennel	C	(Princeton)		
Classic	Peterson	B	Parade	Northrup King/Van Der Have	B/C
Columbia	Turf Seed	A	Ram I	Lofts Great Western/Jacklin	B/B
Common	Full Circle	B	Rugby	Northrup King/Turf Merchants	B/C
Compact	E.F. Burlingham & Sons	C	Sophia	Van Der Have	B
Coventry	O.M. Scott	B	Suffolk	Jacklin/Lofts G. Western	B/C
Cynthia	Van Der Have	C	Sydsport	Burlingham	C
Dawn	Turf Seed/Lesco	B/B	Tendos	Turf Merchants	B
Destiny	Jonathan Green	A	Topfit	Turf Merchants	C
Eclipse	Jacklin/Zajac/Peterson	B/C/C	Topstar	Turf Merchants	C
Enmundi	Seed Research	C	Touchdown	Pickseed	B
Estate	Roberts	B	Trenton	Northrup King	B
Freedom	Jacklin	B	True Blue	Turf Merchants	A
Fylking	Jacklin	B	Victoria	O.M. Scott	B
Georgetown	Lofts Great Western	B	Wabash	Jacklin	B
Glade	Jacklin	B	Washington	Jonathan Green	C
Gnome	Turf Merchants	A	SR 2000	Seed Research	C
			SR 2100	Seed Research	C

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

ennial ryegrass, supplies this year of Pennant, Belle and Competitor will be limited, says **Shari Burlingham** of E.F. Burlingham & Sons. "Competitor, our new variety, will be included in our mixtures this year. We'll custom blend it to meet individual needs and requirements."

Tubbs said most of TMI's proprietary perennial ryegrasses will be in adequate supply, although the crop isn't nearly as good as 1988's—increased acreage should offset decreased yields.

This harvest yielded the first crop of Bonsai dwarf fescue, a specie that has been sparking interest throughout the industry. According to Tubbs, recent excavation of a 10-month-old Bonsai sod plot in southern California proved conclusively that Bonsai's roots extended a full six feet below the surface. "So there is no truth to the speculation that the dwarfs have shallow root systems," says Tubbs, who

believes Bonsai and similar varieties will take over the turf market west of the Mississippi due to their attractiveness as turf with drastically reduced maintenance requirements.

### Bring on the blues

"The yields for proprietary bluegrasses were nothing to write home about," says Tubbs. "Most are based on the price of common bluegrasses, which is cheaper than it has been for several years and awfully strong. Fall demand will be required to keep the proprietaries from slipping. There will be some shortage of older, lower yielding varieties, but more than ample supplies overall."

Fine Lawn Research's **Bill Junk** says the Chateau Kentucky bluegrass crop will be adequate. Midnight fans will be glad to hear from Turf Seed's Stanley that recent acreage increases for Midnight should result in adequate supplies by crop year 1990.

**Harry Butler**, Jacklin's vice president of marketing, says there will be selected shortages on some of the lower seed-yielding varieties of proprietary Kentucky bluegrass. "There is a slight increase in acres over last year," says Butler, "however, we still do not have sufficient producing acres to meet demand. New acres have become difficult to place due to other competing commodities, such as wheat, corn and other grain products."

Says Northrup King's Churchill: "Our bluegrass yields are coming in very well at press time. We anticipate a good supply of most varieties throughout the year."

Churchill also reports adequate supplies of the "Penn Pals" bentgrasses.

Sources say most of the proprietary fine fescues grown in Oregon are disappointing contractors with both yields and clean-outs, and there is a great disparity between the common



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Canadian red fescue crop and the Oregon fine fescue crop. Chewings and hard fescues could be in short supply, especially if strong demand for certified varieties from Europe

continues.

"Many factors limit successful increase in production acres," says **John Zajac** of Zajac Performance Seeds.

"Demand in most segments remains good. Therefore, I expect the higher quality, better marketed varieties to remain in a 'no surplus' condition for some time." **LM**

## Canadians still enjoy '88 crop

Though the United States is a net exporter of turfseed, some of what New Zealand and Canada exports may find its way here.

From New Zealand comes perennial ryegrasses Nui and Ruanui, which are harvested in January. Usually pegged for forage use, they may have lawn applications.

Estimates are that New Zealand will import as much as 20 million pounds of seed this year, according to Dave Nelson, director of the Oregon Fine Fescue Commission.

Rain has kept Canada's harvest of fescue and forage seed down significantly from last year, according to Al Dooley, a special commodity analyst with Alberta Agriculture. Canada exports about 20 million pounds of fescue annually, some of which finds its way into bluegrass mixtures.

"The United States is our most important market by a long shot," says Dooley. "You guys take 70 to 90 percent of our export."

Canada's principal turfgrass is the creeping red fescue Boreal, used primarily as a filler in Kentucky bluegrass mixtures.

"We feel it's a good variety because of its shade tolerance, hardiness, and the fact that it's a creeper that fills in bare spots well," says Marvin Nakonetchny, secretary master of Canada's Forage Seed Council. The exportability of Boreal depends on U.S. demand, says Nakonetchny, and the current market price of 25 cents/lb. is likely to send most of it into storage.

"The fact that it's sold as a no-name variety in the U.S. is a problem we should address," he adds.

Canadian seed comes from the prairie provinces: the Peace River region of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Last year Canada enjoyed an exceptional crop, says Dooley. That resulted in the export of approximately 18.5 million pounds of fescue, 13.6 million pounds of red clover, 8.0 million pounds of sweet clover, 5.25 pounds of alsike clover and 1.5 million pounds of brome grass clover.

Because of the region's climate, storing the seed for several years is not a problem. As a result, last year's bumper crop is still on hand should America's bluegrass market take off this fall.

A very limited amount of Canada's acreage does consist of bluegrasses. Canadians are also looking at turf-type fescues and ryegrasses, "... but so far it's insignificant," adds Nakonetchny.

—Will Perry □

## ROUGH BLUEGRASS

VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
Laser poa trivialis	Lofts Great Western	B
Sabie	International	B

## COMMON BLUEGRASS

VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
Argyle	Olsen-Fennel	B
Kenblue	Jacklin/Olsen-Fennel/ Turf Merchants/Roberts	B/B/A/C
Merit	Van Der Have	B
Newport	Olsen-Fennel/Van Der Have/Northrup King/Roberta	C/B/B/B
Park	Jacklin/Turf Merchants/ Northrup King/Roberts	B/A/B/B
S-21	Jacklin	B
South Dakota	Jacklin	B
Troy	Jacklin	B
Garfield	Jacklin	B

## WINTER OVERSEEDING BLENDS

VARIETY	MARKETER	AVAILABILITY
Alliance	Turf Seed	B
CBS II	Turf Seed	B
Champion	Seed Research	B
Dixie Green	International	B
Dixie Green tall fescue	International	B
Dixie Green + Sabre	International	B
Double Eagle blend	Lesco	B
Double Eagle + Sabre	Lesco	B
Eagle Blend	Lesco	B
Futura Plus	Pickseed	B
Futura 2000	Pickseed	B
Futura 2000E	Pickseed	C
3CN Intermediate Ryegrass	Lesco	B
Magnum	Proprietary	B
Medalist 5	Northrup King	B
Medalist 6	Northrup King	B
Medalist 7	Northrup King	B
Medalist 7 + Sabre	Northrup King	B
Medalist 300	Northrup King	B
Medalist 400	Northrup King	B
Medalist 400 +	Northrup King	B
Medalist 60/40	Northrup King	B
Par Blend	Lesco	B
Pennway Bent Blend	Lesco	B
Bent Blend Plus	Lesco	B
Ph. D.	International	B
Playmate	Roberts	B
Spectrum	Turf Merchants	B
Symphony	E.F. Burlingham & Sons	C
Tara-Green	Hubbard Seed & Supply	B
Transtar	Lesco	B
Triple Play Rye	Fine Lawn Research	B
Trilogy	E.F. Burlingham & Sons	C
V.I.P. Rye	Turf Merchants	B
Winter Turf I	O.M. Scott	B
Winter Turf III	O.M. Scott	B
Winter Turf V	O.M. Scott	B
Winter Turf IX	O.M. Scott	B