

**MINNESOTA TURF SEED COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER
July 15, 2014**

RYEGRASS GROWING DEGREE DAYS (GDD)

Ryegrass GDD will be tracked for the 2014 growing season with comparisons to the previous five years. A base temperature of 32 degrees F will be used for ryegrass (T-Base = 32 F). Reported GDD are based on the total accumulation from the beginning of the year to the current calendar date. To date in 2014, we have accumulated 2,137 GDD as of July 13th (Table1).

The ten day forecast near Roseau projects below average temperatures for the first part of the week with a return to more normal temperatures for mid-July, later in the week. The projected 10 day forecast is for average high and low temperatures of 78 and 58 F, respectively. If this forecast holds, accumulated GDD for the year will be 2,379 by the weekend.

Table 1. Growing degree days (GDD) for March to June, near Roseau, MN in 2009-2014.

Year	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2014 vs. 13
March	0	0	304	7	137	30	0
April	159 [^]	80	370	278	476	247	-2
May	654	640	726	639	707	515	+14
June	964	975	979	898	911	860	-11
July 1-13	441						
July 14-20*	242						
July**	1,116	1088	1230	1162	1174	943	
Total***	2,812	2,783	3,609	2,984	3,405	2,595	

[^] -78 GDD after majority of snow drifts melted

* - Forecasted GDD at Roseau for the next 7 days

** - Projected GDD for July based on an average of 36 GDD/day

*** - Total for 2014 includes projected GDD for July

GENERAL CROP CONDITION

Ryegrass fields seeded in the spring of 2013 are still shedding pollen, but nearing the end of flowering period. Ryegrass plants are in the seed filling stage and will soon enter the dry down phase.

Historically, a good benchmark for swathing ryegrass is after the accumulation of 2,800 GDD. As of July 13th, annual accumulated GDD was 2,137, which leaves 663 GDD remaining to reach 2,800 for the year. The 10 day forecast projects an average of 36 GDD/day. If this forecast holds it will take approximately 18 days to reach the 2,800 GDD benchmark. Environmental and specific field conditions will determine the actual swathing date for ryegrass.

PEST MANAGEMENT

Grasshoppers and armyworms have been observed in isolated ryegrass fields. Check with your local agronomist or crop scout for insect population levels in your area.

CROP MANAGEMENT

When to swath ryegrass? That is a question often asked by growers. It seems our eyes are drawn to the most mature areas of the field. When making decisions on when to cut ryegrass, make sure a **representative sample is taken from the entire field not just areas that are most mature**. One method to get a representative field sample is to take samples from areas that look mature, from areas that are intermediate and from areas of the field that look green. Note the percentage of the field in each of these categories. This will give you a good overall field estimate of maturity. Once these samples are collected seed moisture can be determined using a microwave oven. If possible, delay swathing until moisture content of the seed is 35 to 40%. Seed moisture content is determined rubbing the seed from the spike and using the microwave oven to remove the seed moisture.

Caution: In addition to the seed sample, place a small amount of water in a microwave safe container. This will prevent the seed from exploding in the oven. Start with a predetermined seed weight (10 grams) and set the microwave oven for 1 to 1.5 minutes. Continue this procedure until the seed weight is constant. For example, if the initial weight was 10 grams and the final weight was 6 grams the seed moisture is 40%.

Late summer seeding of perennial ryegrass

Ryegrass seeding on prevented planted or fallow acres is a good option for late summer establishment of perennial ryegrass. Research conducted at the U of MN Magnusson Research Farm indicates perennial ryegrass should be seeded by mid-to-late August to optimize perennial ryegrass seed yields. Additional information will be included in next week's newsletter. U of MN Grass Seed Research Reports can be found on Turf Council Website:

http://www.mnturfseed.org/html/progress_reports.html

The next newsletter will be released July 22, 2014.