

**MINNESOTA TURF SEED COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER
July 23, 2013**

Grass Seed Crop Insurance Pilot Program Review

MEETING TO BE HELD THIS THURSDAY, JULY 25th.

A meeting will be held at the Roseau City Center on July, 25th from 9-11 am. The primary purpose of this meeting is to gather input from grass seed growers, and industry feedback on the current grass seed crop insurance pilot project. Interested stakeholders in the grass seed industry are encouraged to attend this meeting.

RYEGRASS GROWING DEGREE DAYS (GDD)

Ryegrass GDD will be tracked for the 2013 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 calendar year to the current calendar date. Thus far in 2013, we have accumulated 2,495 GDD as of July 21st (Table1). Last week, accumulated GDD were 246 (35.9/day). The 7 day forecast predicts a moderation in daily high temperatures from the last few weeks. This week's forecasted daily high temps are in the mid-70's and night-time temps in mid-50's. Based on this forecast, by July 28th we will have added an additional 219 GDD (31.3/day) which will bring the annual accumulated GDD to 2,714.

Table 1. Growing degree days (GDD) for March 2008 to June 2013 near Roseau MN.

Year	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2013 vs. 12
March	0	304	7	137	30	6	-304
April	80	370	278	476	247	202	-594
May	640	726	639	707	515	501	-86
June	975	979	898	911	860	870	-4
July 1-21	800						
July		1230	1162	1174	943	1034	
Total	2,495	3,609	2,984	3,405	2,595	2,613	
July 22-28*	219*						
Total	2,714*						

* Forecasted GDD at Roseau for the next 7 days.

GENERAL CROP CONDITION

Ryegrass

Ryegrass fields are turning color and selected area ryegrass fields have been swathed. To maximize ryegrass seed yield and quality, previous field experience suggest the seed moisture should be below 40% moisture before swathing. As the ryegrass plant matures, fields can mature quickly, especially with warm days of late July into August. When ryegrass is close to the 40% moisture level, seed moisture can drop 2% points or more per day! Consult with your field agronomist to help determine the appropriate time for swathing ryegrass as environmental and specific field conditions will influence the actual swathing date for ryegrass.

PEST MANAGEMENT

Ryegrass

Leaf and stem and crown rust have been observed in area ryegrass fields. The heat of the last few weeks and the recent precipitation may accelerate ryegrass maturity. If low levels of rust spores are detected in ryegrass fields that will be swathed in the next two weeks a fungicide treatment may not be warranted. However, rust spores detected in ryegrass fields that are two weeks or longer from swathing strong consideration should be given to a fungicide treatment to protect the ryegrass field. Consult with your agronomist or fieldman for local experience.

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

CROP MANAGEMENT

Ryegrass

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 a decision on when to cut ryegrass make sure a **representative sample is taken from the entire field not just the 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%.

Wheat harvest

Spring wheat harvest is right around the corner. Wheat straw management is one of the critical steps for successful ryegrass seed crop next year. It is important to get a **uniform spread of the wheat straw and chaff**. Chaff spreaders will spread hulls and other “fines”. A uniform spread of the wheat straw is the first step in successful ryegrass stand establishment for both spring and fall seeded ryegrass. More on ryegrass stand establishment into wheat stubble in next week’s newsletter.

Next week’s newsletter will be released on July 30, 2013.