

# **NORTHERN MINNESOTA GRASS SEED GROWERS NEWSLETTER**

## **June 11, 2008**

### **GENERAL CROP CONDITION**

#### **And the rains came down!**

This week saw our June rainy season begin. For the most part, excess moisture is not putting pressure on the crop, but the cool conditions are. Let's hope for a warm up.

#### **Ryegrass**

Reports around the area have the ryegrass fields looking good.

Ryegrass is quickly approaching 3-4 nodes in development.





## **Bluegrass**

Most fields are beginning to come into head production.



## **PEST MANAGEMENT**

### **Ryegrass**

Most ryegrass fields have been sprayed for weed control, or are ready once the ground is dry enough to go again.

There have been reports of growers interested in fungicide application to prevent rust. At this stage in the season where things have really been cooler than average, a payback from an early application may not be the ticket. If things start to warm up, then itching the trigger-finger may be the thing to do, and stay on-guard.

Ryegrass fields are being monitored for rust. Field scouting will determine when rust **first** appears in ryegrass fields. What does rust look like? The first link is leaf rust in wheat.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=9915>. The second is for stem rust in wheat.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=9910>. The third is for crown rust in oats

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=9919>. Rust in ryegrass looks similar to rust in cereals.

In 2006, it was documented that ryegrass was susceptible to both leaf and stem rust and crown rust. If you see reddish spots on ryegrass leaves please notify your agronomist or seedsmen. Suspected rust samples will be sent to the Cereal Rust Lab in St. Paul for positive identification.

Every two weeks during the growing season, the progress of rust is detailed in a publication titled: Cereal Rust Bulletin. This publication is available at [www.ars.usda.gov/mwa/cdl](http://www.ars.usda.gov/mwa/cdl).

The three links below are pest updates from the U of MN and the MN Dept of Ag. These reports are updated regularly during the summer months. The first link is for vegetable crops, second link is the MN Dept of Ag Pest Survey and the third is a crop report from the U of MN in Crookston.

<http://www.vegedge.umn.edu/mnfruit&vegnews/Vol4/vol4n1.htm>

<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/pestmanagement/pestsurvey.htm>

[http://nwroc.umn.edu/Cropping\\_Issues/croppingissues.htm](http://nwroc.umn.edu/Cropping_Issues/croppingissues.htm)

## **CROP MANAGEMENT**

### **Bluegrass**

Growers have started to see areas of powdery mildew in production fields, and will begin fungicide applications.

Scout bluegrass fields for powdery mildew. With the cool and wet conditions that this spring is giving us, scouting bluegrass fields for powdery mildew in the next few weeks will be warranted. Cool temperatures generally correspond to heavy dews. With temperatures below the dew point, the dew falls early in the evening and remains on the plant foliage until mid-to late morning. Continue to scout fields every 2 to 3 days until weather conditions change. Powdery mildew will not spread if weather conditions are hot and dry, so chances are we will see good growth potential for a few weeks.

### **Ryegrass**

One thing to note is that green foxtail has emerged in the past week to 10 days. It is highly recommended to spray Puma to combat the wild oats and green foxtail and reduce the cleanout percentages at the processing facility. Speak with your agronomist regarding rates and timing.

It has also been noticed that the growth stage of ryegrass is very variable, and is thought to be a result of planting date. A study being conducted on the Magnusson research farm will hopefully shed some light on the impact of planting date on maturity and yield.







## **Natives**

The bluestem fields have finally come to life, and with a little heat, should be up and running.



Reports are that the switchgrass market is soft, and a fair amount of fields were not renewed for 2008.

## **Ryegrass Growing Degree Days (GDD)**

Ryegrass GDD units have been tracked since the 2005 season. A base temp of 32 degrees F has been used for ryegrass (T-Base =32 F). The GDD information presented in the table below is year to date data, through and including June 7th for the years 2005 to 2008.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>08 vs. 07</b>
March	6	90	53	35	-84
April	202	322	529	448	-120

May	508	746	749	641	-238
June 1-7	174	193	246	205	-19
Total	890	1,351	1,577	1,329	-461

The 2008 season continues to track cooler than any year since 2005. Year-to-date GDD has the 2008 season -461 behind the 2007, -687 behind 2006 and -439 behind 2005.

Mildew in bluegrass was detected in Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties the last week of May. Thus far in 2008, mildew infestations are light (just a white spot on a few leaves). However, mildew can “flare” in a few days if environmental conditions are favorable. Field scouting will determine the severity of pest outbreaks and the need for an application of a fungicide for disease control.

Early bluegrass varieties, e.g. Park and Minnifine, are heading. Later maturing varieties are still vegetative.

Spring seeded ryegrass three to four nodes and fall seeded ryegrass vegetative to two nodes.

The next edition of the newsletter is scheduled to be released on June 18, 2008.