MINNESOTA TURF SEED GROWERS NEWSLETTER
July 20, 2010

RYEGRASS GROWING DEGREE DAYS (GDD)

Ryegrass GDD will be tracked for the 2010 growing season with comparisons to the last four years. A base temp of 32 degrees F will be used for ryegrass (T-Base = 32 F). The GDD information presented in Table 1 is March to July in 2006 - 2009 and March, April, May, June and July 1 - 18 in 2010.

Table 1. Growing degree days (GDD) for March - July in 2006 - 2009 and March, April, May, June and July 1-18 in 2010 at Roseau MN.

Year	**2010**	**2009**	**2008**	**2007**	**2006**	**2010 vs. 09**
March	137	30	6	90	53	+107
April	476	247	202	322	529	+229
May	707	515	501	746	730	+192
June	911	860	870	990	943	+51
July		943	1,034	1,156	1,206	
July 1-18	661					
Total	2,892	2,595	2,613	3,304	3,461	

Last week we accumulated an average of 34.1 GDD/day. The 2010 season has been one of the earliest in recent memory. Winter wheat harvest began over the weekend and spring wheat will be harvested in July. Even some of the "old timer" don't remember many years when spring wheat is harvested in July!

GENERAL CROP CONDITION

Ryegrass

Ryegrass is quickly turning color and several ryegrass fields have been swathed. Swathers will be cutting ryegrass this week. To maximize ryegrass seed yield and quality, previous field experience suggest the seed moisture should be below 40% moisture before swathing. Consult with your field agronomist to help determine the appropriate time for swathing ryegrass.

Bluegrass

The majority of the bluegrass has been harvested.

PEST MANAGEMENT

Ryegrass

Scout for armyworms if fields have not been sprayed.

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 determination 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%.

Bluegrass

This week may be a good time to burn bluegrass fields. A good burn is one of the CRITICAL steps in bluegrass management. A good burn sets the stage for seed production for the next season. A desiccant should be considered if the bluegrass straw is light, poor distribution of straw or excessive bluegrass growth. Relative humidity levels in the 40's or lower tend to promote a clean burn of bluegrass straw.

Remember to get a burning permit and it's always a good idea to give your neighbors a "heads up" when you plan to burn. One of the first reactions to smoke in the neighborhood is a house or building fire. A phone call or two prior to burning will ease some of this anxiety.

The next edition of this newsletter will be released on July 27, 2010.