

February 2011

Market Update

The days are getting longer and the absence of our traditional rains have our grass seed growers out early with fertilizer and in some cases, Round-up. Strong wheat prices (\$8.50+/bushel) have changed the game for grass seed producers, providing a quick-cash alternative to below-cost production of tall fescues and other amenity grasses. Some fields of perennial ryegrass are under pressure if third-year seed yield history of the variety is poor. Current inventories are moving out as Europe, Asia and the USA emerge from winter. Grass seed prices are rising and the period of super-abundant, super-cheap grasses is heading to the history books. One certainty in life is that just when you think you have the markets figured out, conditions shift and the surprise jolts you from your stupor.



Golf Industry Show in Orlando

It was great to see everyone at the tradeshow in Orlando. The event was smaller in terms of square footage, but attendance and booth traffic was an improvement over last year. Our distributor luncheon set an attendance record with a presentation by Jeff Plotts, Superintendent at TPC Scottsdale, home of The Phoenix Open. Jeff's tournament concluded on Monday afternoon and he was in front of our group the next day! Pat Jones of *Golf Course Industry* magazine gave a historical review of the industry's past five years and offered his forecast for the next five. Mike Hills discussed using Champion Fine for permanent sports turf, followed by Drs. Leah Brilman and Rich Hurley on lessons learned from the brutal summer of 2010.

All the presentations were video taped and segments of them will be posted on our website later this spring. The presenters' PowerPoint presentations will also be posted on our website as pdf downloads very soon.

CHAMPION FINE

PERENNIAL RYEGRASS

DOMINATOR

CREEPING BENTGRASS BLEND

FAIRWAY METAL

CREEPING BENTGRASS BLEND

2011 Bentgrass Availability

Summer injury in the United States and Japan lead to a tremendous upsurge in bentgrass sales during late summer and early fall 2010; particularly of the new, highly-rated varieties from Seed Research. Good news in the volumes, but the downside is that we are carrying less seed for spring and summer 2011 plantings than we had forecast. We now offer coated seed on 007, Tyee, and our new blend, Dominator – a combination of Tyee, 007 and MacKenzie (click variety to see tech sheet).

And, remember to take advantage of our new bentgrass blend, Fairway Metal for spring repair projects to tees and fairways. Economical and clean seed from the turfgrass experts as Seed Research.