

NORTHWEST TURFGRASS TOPICS

VOL. 11, No. 3

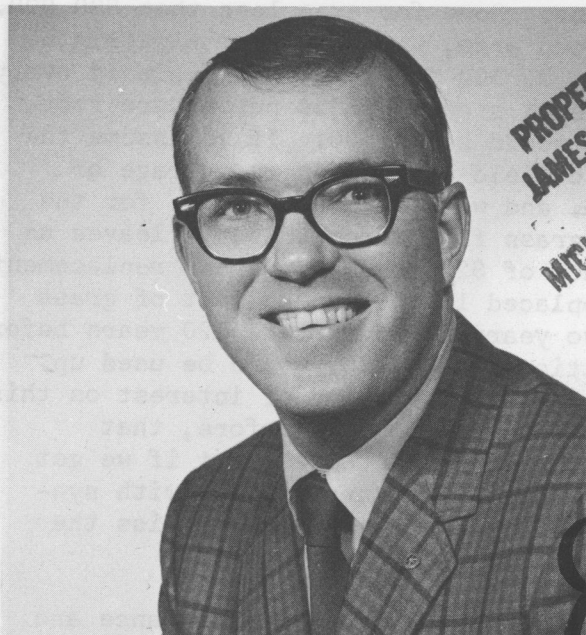
PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON

DECEMBER, 1969

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

IT'S HIGH TIME —

SYNTHETICALLY SPEAKING



By TOM KEEL

by Roy L. Goss

It's high time that all of the facts be reviewed before you stampede into purchasing synthetic turf. All too frequently people consider only one side of the coin. There is no question that synthetic turf is beautiful, durable, desirable but not inexpensive and trouble free. Perhaps the greatest single attraction to synthetic turf, is the constant reminder that injuries to players are practically non-existent as compared to grass turf. The truth of the matter is, quite often the comparison between grass and synthetic turf is not valid at all. I will lay you odds that if great rips, tears and holes were not repaired in synthetic turf that it would be just as treacherous, or more so, than the worst kind of turfgrass field. The proponents of synthetic turf, however, point out the injuries that occur on all of the extremely bad grass fields around the nation. It should be pointed out that most of the grass fields over the country, are bad. This is due, simply, to the fact that little or no care is given to the construction and subsequent maintenance of the grass field. All too often the person looking after the grass field cannot even look after his own home lawn to say nothing about the most important piece of real estate called "football fields". With reasonable care in construction and maintenance, a grass field can be developed that is far superior to those normally observed around the country.

SAFER ATHLETIC FIELDS

Mr. Harry Wilcox, former county agent in Pennsylvania was quoted by Mr. Wayne Morgan of the Kellogg Co as follows: "Checking on injuries at a high school field, accurate records were kept before and after a safety program was instituted at both the practice and playing field. Before starting their program the soil had been drastically compacted by heavy equipment during construction. This condition plus using the area for intensive practice resulted in weak, thin turf with very shallow roots. Water penetration into the soil was greatly restricted and puddling of the soil occurred. Their program for a

I want to take this opportunity to extend the Seasons Greetings to you and your families from myself, the Board of Directors and Officers of the Northwest Turfgrass Association.

All committee assignments for the coming year have been made and arrangements for the Association Conference scheduled for October 7, 8, and 9 at Salishan are started. Over 100 reservations have already been made so you see that interest is running high. I would suggest that those planning to attend this event make reservations early.

Members are urged to send any suggestions for Conference speakers and topics to Roy Goss or myself for consideration at the Board of Directors meeting scheduled for the first part of March. The program will be finalized at that time. Copies of the program will be made available at least a month prior to the Conference so that you may show these to prospective members and help promote the event. This year there will be pre-registration for the Conference. This should help everyone involved.

Art Elliott and I have put together a packet—a copy of the program of the Hayden Lake Conference, a brochure explaining the Association and a membership application—to present to prospective members. If you know anyone

(Continued on Page 5)

planned schedule of turfgrass management to grow grass on a continuing year-round basis consisted of: 1. Aerification to loosen the soil and break up severe compaction. 2. Seeding the proper grasses adaptable to the area and use. 3. Proper fertilization. 4. Correct watering. 5. Proper mowing. They found their program could be carried out simply by re-allocating already budgeted funds. During football practice before the program was instituted, recorded injuries were: August-9 injuries, September-12 injuries, for a total of 21. After the corrective program was instituted there were 2 injuries in October and 2 in November resulting in 17 less injuries. During games, 20 injuries were recorded in games away from home out of a total of 9 games. In 10 home games, there were 9 injuries, resulting in 11 less injuries due to good football field management."

It is the writer's contention that if the proponents of synthetic turf were to compare the number and types of injuries sustained on ten of the nations best grass fields compared to a like number of synthetic fields, there would be some real interesting results. If however, we use the statistics of all grass fields that have been surveyed as compared to only three or four synthetic fields, we simply do not have a statistic at all. If there is one, it would certainly be in favor of a synthetic turf. The memorial stadium in Seattle, Washington, while being reconstructed for synthetic turf, was found to contain scrap metal, chunks of concrete, glass and many other foreign objects that could cause severe player injuries. Furthermore, there was little or no grass at all in the field due to intensive use and improperly formulated soils and poor construction. In being realistic let us say, that if the field is to be used only for football by one school with a limited number of track and field events the following spring, it hardly seems feasible that synthetic turf can be economically practical. If however, the field is to be used by several schools and athletic events such as soccer, baseball and other intramural sports will be practiced as well as football, then there is probably no way that grass can fill this bill. Synthetic turf would certainly be justifiable in this case.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Certainly the figures for synthetic turf run all the way from \$250,000. up to one-half

million dollars for a regulation football field. Some grass fields have been recently rebuilt in Western Washington and I might add, properly, for a cost of under \$50,000 which includes subsurface drainage, automatic irrigation, proper soils, and either sodding or seeding. Some for even less than \$20,000. If the worn area, which is approximately 60 feet wide by 300 ft. long, was replaced every two years at a cost of 25¢ per square foot, the cost would be \$4,500. If we assume the synthetic field would cost an average of \$300,000. and we deducted \$40,000. for the cost of grass field from this, it leaves us with a net of \$260,000. for grass replacement. If we replaced 18,000 square feet of grass every two years it would take 120 years before the additional \$260,000. would be used up. You can compute the value of interest on this \$260,000. It appears, therefore, that there are some hidden costs, but if we get too starry eyed and carried away with synthetic turf we are very prone to miss the hidden factors.

There is no doubt that the maintenance and management of grass turf will cost somewhat more than synthetic turf. The maintenance cost of turf at Joe Albi Stadium in Spokane, which can be considered one of the finest grass fields in the country runs under \$1,000. per acre per year. This is just something to think about if you are considering the installation of synthetic turf.

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**List of the attendance at the Northwest
Turfgrass Association's Conference Sept.
24-26, 1969 at Hayden Lake Country Club,
Hayden Lake, Idaho.**

Dr. Dan Adler, Corvallis, Ore.
Chet Allbee, Seattle, Wa.
Dr. Dave Allmendinger, Puyallup, Wa.
Bud Ashworth, Liberty Lake, Wa.
Melvin L. Arrasmith, Clarkston, Wa.
Jerry Bacon, Bend, Ore.
Dick Bailey, Halsey, Ore.
Tom Baltz, Portland, Ore.
Tom Bartol, Portland, Ore.
Clayton, Bauman, Kent, Wa.
Milt Bauman, Puyallup, Wa.
Lee Bean, San Jose, Cal.
Dale Beardsley, Spokane, Wa.
Norris Beardsley, Spokane, Wa.
Wm. Bengeyfield, Garden Grove, Cal.
Denis H. Besley, Victoria, B.C.
E. T. Bice, Jr., Roseburg, Ore.
Allen C. Blair, Seattle, Wa.
Jack Blair, Albany, Ore.
Wilbur Bluhm, Salem, Ore.
Don Braaten, Salem, Ore.
Harold Branson, Fresno, Cal.
Michael D. H. Brooks, W. Vancouver, B. C.
Dave Brown, Island City, Ore.
Herb Brown, Spokane, Wa.
Sy Byle, Deerharbor, Wa.
Jake Casidy, McMinnville, Ore.
Hal Chonle, Spokane, Wa.
Virgil Clark, Everett, Wa.
Tom Cochran, Seattle, Wa.
Richard W. Courtney, Spokane, Wa.
Dale M. Dasch, Everett, Wa.
Robert Dauterman, Longview, Wa.
Wayne Dean, Yakima, Wa.
Robert L. Deaver, Spokane, Wa.
Norm DeChambeau, Oak Harbor, Wa.
Don Dodson, Moxee City, Wa.
George Domich, Kelowna, B. C.
Peter Dotto, Vancouver, B. C.
Don Doyon, Richland, Wa.
John C. Eby, Fall City, Wa.
Arthur D. Elliott, Seattle, Wa.
Ron Ensign, Moscow, Idaho
Frederick E. Ewing, Fall City, Wa.
Cliff Everhart, Spokane, Wa.
Richard Fankhauser, Olympia, Wa.
Dick Fluter, Lake Oswego, Ore.
Ed Fluter, Portland, Ore.
Ray D. Ford, San Anselmo, Cal.
Fuss Fouts, Albany, Ore.
George C. Frank, Seattle, Wa.
Gerald T. Fryatt, Minneapolis, Minn.
Bill Gabel, Walla Walla, Wa.
Frank Gavan, Victoria, B. C.

Dick Gettle, Tacoma, Wa.
Dr. Roy L. Goss, Puyallup, Wa.
Homer A. Gray, Corvallis, Ore.
Bill Griffing, Edmonds, Wa.
Bond Harmon, Warden, Wa.
George M. Harrison, Tacoma, Wa.
John Harrison, Hayden Lake, Idaho
Dick Haskell, Seattle, Wa.
Al Hausotter, Klamath Falls, Ore.
Omer Henderson, Lynnwood, Wa.
Don Hogan, Seattle, Wa.
Harold Huffman, North Surrey, B. C.
Nick Hughes, Spokane, Wa.
Dave E. Hulo, Portland, Ore.
Bruce Jackman, Clarkston, Wa.
John Jaslowski, Seattle, Wa.
Art Main, Bothell, Wa.
Tom Keel, Roseburg, Ore.
Milton D. Knott, Nine Mile Falls, Wa.
Donald Kolassa, Spokane, Wa.
Richard Krahn, Richmond, B. C.
Robert Krueger, Seattle, Wa.
Bill Larson, Renton, Wa.
Bob Larson, Bellingham, Wa.
Dean Latimer, Tacoma, Wa.
Loren Laughlin, Olympia, Wa.
George Lawton, Tacoma, Wa.
Bruce Leibrock, Santa Ana, Cal.
Willard Lighty, Gresham, Ore.
Joe Lymp, Bend, Ore.
Dick Malpass, Junction City, Ore.
Art Marson, Seattle, Wa.
Jerry Matthies, Portland, Ore.
Ken McKenzie, Seattle, Wa.
Don McLeod, Penticton, B. C.
Nick Metal, Vancouver, B. C.
Don J. Miller, Tacoma, Wa.
Ed Minnick
Peter Misan, Nelson, B. C.
Randy Mitchell, Hayden Lake, Idaho
Dick Mitchell, Vancouver, B. C.
John Monson, Corvallis, Ore.
Earl P. Morgan, Anacortes, Wa.
Ray G. Morgan, Elma, Wa.
Ken J. Morrison, Pullman, Wa.
Dave A. Morse, Spokane, Wa.
James E. Moss, Seattle, Wa.
Alfonse Nickisch, Crawford Bay, B. C.
Lloyd Nordstrom, Bellevue, Wa.
Thomas Opstad, Seattle, Wa.
George Osburn, Wilmington, Del.
Gary Perks, Vancouver, B. C.
Raymond E. Perry, Dishman, Wa.
Bill Pierson, Lake Oswego, Ore.
Robert V. Pierson, Eureka, Cal.
Joe Pottenger, Yakima, Wa.
Larry Proctor, Tacoma, Wa.
Ron Proctor, Seattle, Wa.
Ken Putnam, Seattle, Wa.
Byron Reed, Portland, Ore.

ATTENDANCE LIST From page 3

Dr. J. S. Robins, Pullman, Wa.
 Albert Rock, Walla Walla, Wa.
 Ed H. Rogers, Seattle, Wa.
 Cecil H. Rose, Spokane, Wa.
 William P. A. Scheer, Seattle, Wa.
 Clarence Schmidt, Spokane, Wa.
 Dick Schmidt, Renton, Wa.
 Louie Schmidt, Bothell, Wa.
 Ray J. Schmidt, Bellevue, Wa.
 Robert Schoessler, Federal Way, Wa.
 Richard Schwabauer, Portland, Ore.
 Hans Seidlitz, Vancouver, B. C.
 Gary W. Settle, Bellevue, Wa.
 Nick Sherstobitoff, Thrums, B. C.
 J. Drew Smith, Saskatoon, Sask.
 Bob Staib, San Francisco, Cal.
 Robert B. Symonds, Vancouver, B. C.
 Ernie Tate, Crawford Bay, B. C.
 Doug K. Taylor, Agassiz, B. C.
 Myron C. Terpening, Grants Pass, Ore.
 W. T. Thomson, Fresno, Cal.
 Charles Thurman, Spokane, Wa.
 Larry Trent, Lynnwood, Wa.
 Vern Turgeon, Seattle, Wa.
 Frank Tyler, Freeland, Wa.
 Jim Vinson, Portland, Ore.
 Dan F. Collmer, Liberty Lake, Wa.
 Clifford Wagoner, Modesto, Cal.
 Dorothy Ward, Spokane, Wa.
 Jim Watson, Minneapolis, Minn.
 Doug Weddle, Olympia, Wa.
 A Quentin White, Spokane, Wa.
 Norman Whitworth, Gladstone, Ore.
 Glendon Wood, Pullman, Wa.
 Frank Yoshitake, Redmond, Wa.
 John Zoller, Eugene, Ore.
 San Zook, Medina, Wa.
 Deryck Berry, Vancouver, B. C.

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FROM THE OREGON COMPOST HEAP

BY BYRON REED

Too often these days we pass up the old timers in the Turfgrass Industry. Recently, I had the pleasure of being appointed, Historian of the Oregon Turf Managers Association. It has brought to mind the absence of my connection with the old timers. The Association has been lax in keeping the old time records, so to find them it is necessary to go back to the old members and their memories of the beginning days of grass keeping in this area.

I made a phone call to Mr. Henry Luchs who was a charter member of the "Oregon-Washington Greenskeepers Association", back in 1933. Henry now resides in Beaverton, Oregon and is 77 years old and is still working daily landscaping. Henry was the "greenskeeper" of Lloyds Golf Course here in Portland. Lloyds Golf Course is now gone and a freeway has taken its place, U. S. Highway #80 North.

I also had the pleasure of a personal visit to Mr. Charles Beauford, also a charter member and still active as a Golf Course Superintendent Broadmoor Golf Club, Portland, Ore. Charley is a bit hesitant about telling his age, but is still young at heart. Mr. Beauford was Golf Course Superintendent of Alderwood Golf Club for a good many years and it has since given way to the Portland International Airport.

Mr. Fred Federspiel is another of the old timers having served as Superintendent at Evergreen Golf Club, Vancouver, Wash. Royal Oaks Golf Club, Vancouver, Wash. and Oswego Lake Golf & Country Club, Lake Oswego, Ore. Fred is currently doing Golf Course Architecture and resides in Lake Oswego, Ore.

In any case this has all been a most rewarding experience for me and shall continue to be in the future.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER from Page 1

interested in joining the Association, contact Art Elliott at Turf & Toro Supply Co., 6001 Maynard Ave. South, Seattle, Washington 98100 or myself at Douglas County Park Department, Rt. 1, Box 20, Roseburg, Oregon 97470 and this packet will be sent to them. Or if you prefer, the packet will be sent to you and you may present it personally.

To further help in establishing our identity, an Association decal, suitable for display in your office or car, is being developed. This will be issued to all members.

With your cooperation the forthcoming year will be a rewarding one.

NEW TURFGRASS BOOK AVAILABLE

Here is a good deal that you can't afford to pass up. "Turfgrass Science" is an American Society of Agronomy monograph which has been published by that Society and contains 28 chapters of over 700 pages written by 43 authors and co-authors, all experts in their respective fields of endeavor. This is probably the most complete book for reference purposes and factual material on Turfgrasses that has ever been published.

Turfgrass Science covers a wide range in turfgrass culture and contains practical and reference material that will be invaluable to all personnel interested in growing turf. The book will retail for \$10. to members of the American Society of Agronomy and \$12.50 to non-members.

This book may be ordered from the American Society of Agronomy, 677 South Segoe Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53711. You can make your check payable to the Society and order direct.

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1969 TURFGRASS CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The 1969 Turfgrass Conference is past history and the Board of Directors and the members of the Association are looking forward to the 1970 Conference at this time. Hayden Lake Golf & Country Club proved to be a quiet, peaceful and beautiful setting as usual for the 1969 conference. Johnny Harrison, Golf Course Superintendent and Mr. Max Kamp, General Manager at Hayden Lake, handled all details to make the Conference a success at that end. The Conference attendance is published in this issue of Turf Topics. No particular speaker nor session will be singled out at this time but it is complimentary to say that all of the speakers presented very interesting and useful information at the conference. There were no dull moments throughout the sessions and the conference was extremely well attended. Time was allowed after 2 P.M. on Thursday afternoon for holding special meetings, committee assignments, or for recreational pursuits. This seems to break up the tedium of sitting for two full days and listening to talks and to discussions. The Thursday night special program this year considered the topic "General Managers for the Turfgrass Business". We appreciated having Mr. H. Deryck Berry, Mr. Max Kamp and the manager of Manitou Golf & Country Club participating in this panel as Club managers. We were honored to have Cliff Wagoner, Director of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and Dick Malpass, of Shadow Hills Golf and Country Club, representing the Golf Superintendents in this panel.

Although the general managers have a strong feeling that general management is the best approach to running golf courses, this was not entirely shared by the Superintendents present. From the general feelings of the group it appeared that more of the superintendents were in favor of the superintendent being responsible to the green chairman than to the club manager.

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Mr. Berry, of the Capilano Golf & Country Club, however, brought out an important series of questions that would do us all well to ask from time to time. They are: Am I up to date? Am I bucking management? Am I in a rut? Am I afraid to get sound advice? Am I too obstinate? Am I too sensitive to criticism? Do I raise obstacles to suggestions? Am I comparing notes with fellow superintendents? Do I plan my work? Do I take my troubles to the manager? Am I enthusiastic? Do I support my local Superintendents Association? Do I support my national organization? Do I play golf? (Do I get my crew to play?) Do I dress and appear and act like a superintendent? a technician? a professional? Do I try to make my manager look good? (to be successful make the fellow ahead of you look good.)

These are all very good points that we can ask ourselves and whether you are operating under system of general management or other types, these questions will help us do a better job.

1970 TURFGRASS CONFERENCE ON OREGON COAST

The Northwest Turfgrass Conference for 1970 will be held at Salishan which is a beautiful resort on the Oregon Coast on October 7, 8, and 9, 1970. Those of you who attended the Conference at Salishan three years ago will recall that it was an excellent conference site. There is room there for everyone. It is secluded, quiet and not too many distractions.

The Board of Directors of the Northwest Turfgrass Association met at the Western Washington Research & Extension Center on Friday, November 7 and started the ball rolling for plans for this 1970 Conference. Conference topics and speakers were discussed and a tentative program will be published by approximately March of 1970, therefore, it appears that things should be well organized by conference time.

The reservations are coming in fast for accommodations at Salishan, therefore, you should make your reservations as soon as possible if you wish to stay at the lodge.

This is your first notice of the 1970 Conference. Put it on your calendar now, be sure to tell your friends and above all, make your plans to attend this most important conference.

HOW TO BUY TURFGRASS SEED

The United States Department of Agriculture recently published a brochure entitled "How to Buy Lawn Seed". This bulletin was published by the Consumer and Marketing Service and is listed as Home and Garden Bulletin number 169. Some of the excerpts in this bulletin are very important and can be used as a handy guide by the seed buyer.

They state that since the kind of seed you buy is the key to growing the type of lawn best suitable to your particular needs and climate, some simple guide lines have been outlined to help the buyer choose wisely. Before buying turfgrass seed, ask yourself the following questions: 1. What will the turfgrass area be used for? Decoration? Recreation? 2. What do I want my lawn to look like? 3. Which kinds of grass grow well in my part of the country? 4. Will the turfgrass be in the sun or shade? 5. How much time and expense am I willing to put into turfgrass care? The bulletin lists a number of turfgrass species available from seed and gives a few details about them.

FOLLOW THE LABEL

When you buy lawn seed, remember to read the label on the package carefully. Federal and state seed laws assure you that the label will bear truthful and adequate information about the quality of the seed.

The Federal seed Act insures that seed sold across state lines is labeled correctly. It requires specific labeling on seed containers and prohibits false labeling or false advertising. Here is what you should look for on the label: 1. Fine textured or coarse kinds. Labels must identify kinds of seed in the mixture of lawn seeds as either fine textured or coarse kinds. This makes a difference in the quality of your turf and actual quantity of the seed you buy. Fine grasses, with their narrow leaves, provide a "carpet like" turf while coarse ones, which tend to grow in clumps, have wider leaves, and coarser stems and are ideal for hard wear areas. There are more seeds of fine grasses per pound. For example there are about 2 million seeds of Kentucky bluegrass per pound as opposed to 225 thousand of the coarse kinds such as tall fescue and ryegrass. It is obvious from this comparison that a pound of ryegrass or tall fescue will sell much cheaper than a pound of bluegrass or bentgrass. Therefore, don't be taken in by the low price shown on some of the seed bags. False labeling is

against the law, but some times shrewd labeling is a gimmick used to sell grass seed. Frequently, cheap seeds are offered for sale and are merely labeled as lawn seed. Upon examination of the label it is obvious that most of the seed is of the coarse variety type.

(Continued on page 9)

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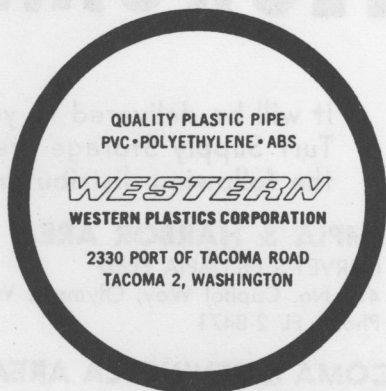
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If you have not conducted soil tests for the past three years on turfgrass areas, now is a good time to do this. The soil testing laboratory will be swamped with farmer samples during the months of March, April and May. The winter months are excellent times for turfgrass managers to send in soil samples to determine if deficiencies exist. If deficiencies are found, remedial programs can be initiated yet this winter and some problems can be corrected throughout the growing season next year. Contact your county extension agent nearest you for information sheets and soil testing cartons for this task. Remember the sandier your soil the quicker all nutrients will leach, hence the reason for testing.



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The labels must state the name of each kind of seed present and the percentage of each in the mixture. A variety is a sub-division of a kind. For example, Merion, Cougar, and Windsor are varieties of Kentucky bluegrass. If the variety name is given, the percentage of that variety must be stated in the labeling. The Federal seed Act requires that if seed is labeled as the variety the variety name must be correct. You should select only varieties that are recommended for use in your area.

Here are some important details to look for in good seed.

1. Germination: This is the percentage of seeds that are expected to produce normal plants under favorable conditions. Check the time when the seed was tested for germination because the seed loses its ability to grow or develop as it ages. Generally under ordinary conditions of handling, the germination percentage is considered reliable up to 6 months after checking.
2. Weed seed: The percentage of weed seed must be stated in the labeling.
3. Noxious weeds: Each state has a list of seeds that it considers noxious or objectionable. These seeds, if present, must be listed on the label and the rate of occurrence must be stated. This rate must not exceed permissible limits established by the laws of each state.
4. Other crop seeds: Incidental seeds or kinds or varieties not named on the label must be listed as a percentage. Although this does not appear to be a very important area, consider the following: If you were purchasing bluegrass seed for planting east of the Cascade mountains and for some reason one-half percent bentgrass was

present in this seed, what would be your problem? In the first place, bentgrass is a weed in a bluegrass stand unless it is purposely added to it, but where you desire pure bluegrass stands, bentgrass should be considered as a weed. Since there are about eight million seeds per pound of bentgrass, one-half percent in this mixture would amount to four million seeds per 100 pounds. If you planted this at the rate of three pounds per 1000 square feet for turf you would be planting 121 bentgrass seeds per square foot. In this case one-half percent would be highly undesirable. If, however, the one-half percent happened to be common Kentucky bluegrass, in an improved bluegrass such as Merion, Cougar, Windsor, etc., then this would not be so important. Therefore, remember, what "other crop" really means when listed on the label.

5. Inert matter: Seed contains various amounts of chaff, dirt and other matter not removed in cleaning. The label must show the percentage as inert matter. This too will effect the amount of productive seed you actually receive when you buy a container of seed.

IS IT WORTH THE PRICE?

One way to tell is to compute the actual value of a seed you are considering. Do this by multiplying the percentage of pure seed by the germination percentage. Then divide this result into the actual cost per pound. For example, seed costing 90¢ per pound with 80% germination and 85% purity gives this result: $80\% \text{ times } 85\% = 68\% \text{ pure-live seed}$. Dividing 90¢ by 68% you get the cost per pound of pure-live seed at \$1.32. In this case, both germination and purity become very important considerations when you look at the price.

The safest bet is to always buy certified seed. Even then there are ranges in quality among this seed.

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