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SUBJECT: 2009 National Cool-Season Traffic Trial

TO: Seed Companies and Breeders

FROM: Kevin N. Morris, Executive Director

DATE: April 27, 2009

In response to the need for more specific information on turfgrass species and cultivars, the NTEP Policy Committee has proposed a new program, *'Trait Specific Testing'*. This new program will establish its first two trials in fall 2009, focusing on drought tolerance and traffic tolerance of cool-season grasses.

This trial, conducted in conjunction with the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA), Safer Athletic Fields Environment Foundation (SAFE), will evaluate traffic tolerance over three years at six to eight locations. Traffic will be imposed to simulate fall football damage. In addition, one half of each plot will be overseeded before year two and year three to approximate practices undertaken by athletic field managers. *The trial will be open to all cool-season grass species, blends and mixtures.*

Following are some highlights of the trial:

1. Six locations (Riverside, CA, Ames, IA, Puyallup, WA, University Park, PA, Lexington, KY and East Lansing, MI) have been chosen to conduct this trial. If enough entries are submitted, one or two more locations may be added.
2. Traffic will be applied during a fall 'season' of 8-10 weeks, to simulate fall football traffic, in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Traffic will be applied to approximate 30% loss of ground cover by week 4-5 and 70% loss of ground cover by week 8-10. High and low traffic tolerant indicator plots will be included in the trial to gauge the 30/70 ground cover loss.
3. Data will be collected regularly on turfgrass ground cover during the traffic season. Species composition will be evaluated (using tiller counts) after the final fall traffic season (2012).
4. One-half of each plot will be overseeded in spring 2011 and 2012. Overseeding establishment will be rated and compared to recovery rates of non-overseeded plots.

TRAFFIC TRIAL MEMO (page two)

5. Cooperators will be required to measure bulk density (at a two inch depth), soil moisture and hardness (using the ASTM F1702-96(2002)e1 method for the Clegg impact hammer) immediately before traffic is applied in a season and immediately after traffic is completed for that season. This will be measured either for each plot or for the standard entries only.
6. After surveying STMA members, plots will be mowed between 1-3/4 and 2-1/4". Nitrogen will be applied at the rate of 0.5 lbs/1000 sq. ft./growing month equivalent to approximate 4 lbs./1000 sq. ft. per year in an eight month growing season. Other nutrients will be applied on a soil test basis.

To read the more detailed traffic trial proposal, please go to the NTEP web site News Room, www.ntep.org/newsroom.htm .

Seed will be needed at Beltsville by mid-to-late August, 2009. The cost for these evaluations will most likely be set at US\$6,000 per entry payable in three annual installments of \$2,000 each.

We surveyed the industry last fall, but we are again gauging the seed industry's interest in submitting entries. Therefore, if you have an entry or entries you would like to enter into this test, please complete the attached questionnaire(s) and return to me by **May 31, 2009**. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me (301-504-5125 phone, 301-873-6545 mobile or kmorris@ntep.org).

2009 NATIONAL COOL-SEASON TRAFFIC TRIAL

Sponsorship of Entries

1. Approximately, how many entries would you like to sponsor? _____

2. How many entries are straight cultivars? _____

Blends/Mixtures _____ (please describe) _____

3. What species are you considering entering? _____

4. ADDRESS

Your name _____

Institution _____

Bldg., Street _____

P. O. Box _____

City, State, Zip _____

Country _____

Phone No. _____ FAX No. _____

Email address _____ Date _____

Return questionnaire to:
(by May 31, 2009)

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