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NTEP *Comings and Goings*

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NTEP data collection: submission, analysis and presentation (part four of a series)

Even though it is still winter in many areas of the U.S., and the world for that matter, signs of spring are starting to emerge in some locations. In this issue of *NTEP Comings and Goings*, we highlight what March will bring you from NTEP, results from recent meetings of the NTEP Policy Committee (NTEP's governing board), and our latest installment in how NTEP processes and reports all that data it collects.

If we can help you with anything or answer any of your questions, please feel free to contact us (301-504-5125, kmorris@ntep.org).

In This Issue

[What's happening with NTEP in March?](#)

[NTEP Policy Committee Meets in Orlando](#)

[NTEP data collection: submission, analysis and presentation \(part four\)](#)

What's happening with NTEP in March?

At the core of NTEP's mission is the need to collect and present accurate turfgrass data in a timely manner. To that end, starting just past the New Year season each year, NTEP staff spends considerable time and effort reviewing, analyzing and preparing NTEP data for publication.

By February 1, data that was collected by cooperators at each university location in the previous year must be submitted to NTEP. When received, the data is first reviewed and checked for any obvious errors. For instance, disease ratings are reviewed to ensure a good disease infection occurred

Late winter and early spring is a busy time for NTEP staff. Data collected in 2010 by our cooperators is received in February. We spend considerable time reviewing, compiling and statistically analyzing the data (see sidebar). This process continues well into summer as it takes us that long to go through each species and report the data on our web site.

PRELIMINARY DATA

A significant event in March is publishing the preliminary data from the past year. We will post on our web site, the turfgrass quality data received thus far, for 2010. The purpose of this posting is to give our members and sponsors a 'heads up' on performance of various cultivars and experimental selections in 2010. Since this data is *preliminary*, we sort the entries alphabetically, not from highest to lowest quality. Look for this data to be published the week of **March 14-18**.

PERENNIAL RYEGRASS OVERSEEDING DATA

With the latest perennial ryegrass test (established in fall 2010), three sites (Tucson, AZ, Auburn, AL and Gainesville, FL) have overseeded the ryegrass entries into bermudagrass fairways. We recently visited the Florida site, which is a fairway on the University of Florida golf course (see pics below). Many entries are performing well, thus far, with color, quality and density ratings being collected by our cooperator, Dr. Jason Kruse. Information from these three sites, including spring transition data, will be available at summer's end. These trials will be overseeded again this fall to obtain two years of overseeding data.



2011 KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS TEST

Our work is progressing on the setup and details for the newest Kentucky bluegrass trial. The advisory committee, using results of our online survey, has recommended several important ancillary trials for establishment. Organic lawn management, traffic under low and medium mowing heights, and shade and summer patch tolerance, are some of the ancillary trials planned, among others.

As of this writing, standard trial locations will be maintained under medium or low maintenance (which includes drought stress). Twenty-four (24) total trial locations have been identified and will be strongly considered for funding.

and that the proper rating scale was used (many pathologists in the U.S. use a different scale for rating diseases than NTEP uses). This is accomplished by comparing the ratings of certain disease susceptible "standard" entries with other entries. If the standard entries have high ratings, we suspect that either the wrong scale was used or a low disease infection was present. After an initial review, any questions or problems found are directed to the cooperator.

NTEP staff also carefully inspects data with small numerical differences or of questionable value. For instance, a cooperator may collect data on a trait like color or density, but the differences between the entries seems insignificant (ratings are generally very high).

Sometimes, ratings are collected multiple times from one location where NTEP does not require that many ratings. In this case, NTEP has to choose the most appropriate ratings to include in the data set.

When all of these questions are resolved, the data is statistically analyzed using an ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) procedure. ANOVA compares the data collected across replications and entries in terms of their means and variability. NTEP examines the ANOVA produced for each data set (data set is defined as the data from one species test at one location). Data sets that appear to be problem-free are emailed to the cooperator for final review. If no problems are found with the data as it is analyzed by NTEP, it is used in that form by NTEP.

More work still needs to be done, and even though nothing is finalized, it is safe to say that this trial will feature some new and important traits and will glean valuable data in the years to come.

Stay tuned for more information!

NTEP Policy Committee Meets in Orlando



The NTEP Policy Committee, NTEP's governing board, met most recently in February in Orlando, just after the Golf Industry Trade Show. Due to budget restrictions, the group had not met face-to-face since June 2009, opting instead to conduct its business via computer conferencing.

Current NTEP Policy Committee members:

Mr. Warren Bell, Biograss Sod
 Dr. Ken Diesburg, Southern Illinois University
 Dr. Scott Ebdon, University of Massachusetts
 Dr. Melodee Fraser, Pure-Seed Testing
 Mr. Paul Hedgpeth, Columbia River Seeds
 Dr. Doug Karcher, University of Arkansas
 Dr. David Kopec, University of Arizona
 Mr. Pat McClain, Burlingham Seeds
 Dr. Jeff Nus, USGA

Following are a few highlights of the meeting:

Concerning the new Kentucky bluegrass test, the committee voted to reduce fees for experimental entries, and entries that have been previously tested by NTEP. The committee also agreed to investigate the use of new DNA techniques to categorize the entries in this trial.

There is interest in adding value to NTEP data for our customers. One option under consideration is an online database that would allow users to sort data and develop custom reports of selected entries and locations.

NTEP is also discussing a possible partnership with the Lawn Institute, to provide data in a homeowner-friendly format. This effort would increase the value of NTEP to the market where 2/3 of turfgrass seed is sold.

Here is a summary of the meeting [highlights](#).

Thanks for reading again, in this issue about what is happening at NTEP. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at 301-504-5125 or

Problems are found in 25 to 30 percent (%) of the data sets during the cooperator review step. Often the problems relate to improper coding of the data. These problems are normally easily corrected. Again, NTEP staff directs the questions it has to the cooperator. After consultation with the cooperator, questionable data is either adjusted or discarded. The corrected data sets are analyzed again, emailed to cooperators for their final review.

By the middle of March each year, seed companies and turf managers are often clammering for any info on how entries of interest to them are performing. Therefore, at that time, NTEP publishes a 'preliminary report' for each species of turfgrass quality data only. This data is preliminary because we are still in the data 'review' stage and some data may be adjusted before the 'official' reports are published.

Also during this process, NTEP solicits info from seed companies on names that may have been assigned to experimental entries, as well as their commercial availability. This information is then used during report generation (see below).

When it is deemed that all data within a species is correct, 'official' report generation begins. All data, not just turf quality data, is then statistically analyzed, each in a separate table. This is a time consuming process that normally takes anywhere from 1-2 weeks per trial. If a trial contains multiple species, and we thus have to sort the data into more groups, this process will take even

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Sincerely,



Kevin Morris
Executive Director
National Turfgrass Evaluation Program



THINK SPRING!!

longer. Also, our new statistical analysis procedure, AMMI, is more time consuming at present. AMMI however, is a better predictor of cultivar performance. We profiled AMMI in an earlier [newsletter](#).

As each species report is completed, it is reviewed by NTEP staff for accuracy. Sometimes, even at this stage, data is discarded, if its LSD value is too high or the data is of questionable value. When all those concerns are addressed, the data is ready for web publishing.

**NEXT TOPIC: HOW TO
BEST UTILIZE NTEP
RESULTS**

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