

### Kinds and Quantities of Turf Seeds Purchased by Golf Courses

The facts and figures here presented are taken from a report recently published by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, based on replies received from 1,189 golf courses in the United States in response to a questionnaire sent by the Bureau to more than 3,800 golf clubs and municipal courses. Of these 3,800 golf courses, 1,733 replied to the questionnaire; 1,189 gave figures indicating the quantity of seed they purchased, intended to purchase, or their average annual purchases; 495 gave no figures but indicated that they usually purchased little or no seed because they had sand greens or else native grass that did not require reseeding or for other reasons; and 49 failed to indicate whether or not they ever purchased seed. Included in the 3,800 courses within the survey were also some courses that were not in operation.

#### AVERAGE ANNUAL PURCHASES OF TURF SEEDS MADE BY 1,189 GOLF COURSES

	Pounds
Rye grasses:	
Italian .....	333,500
Domestic (mostly Italian, with a small proportion of perennial and other rye grasses) .....	210,500
Perennial .....	14,400
	558,400
Kentucky bluegrass .....	213,900
Redtop .....	161,700
Fescues:	
Chewings' .....	63,400
Meadow .....	16,300
Sheep's .....	9,300
Other fescues .....	2,500
	91,500
Bents:	
Mixed .....	27,500
Colonial .....	15,800
Seaside creeping .....	15,400
Velvet .....	1,833
Other bents (unclassified) .....	2,930
	63,463
Bermuda grass .....	48,900
Mixtures (commercial) .....	26,300
Timothy .....	15,700
White clover .....	9,900
Carpet grass .....	3,300
Clovers other than white clover .....	3,200
Rough-stalked bluegrass .....	1,900
Miscellaneous .....	8,187
	1,206,350
Total .....	1,206,350

"No attempt has been made," the Bureau states, "to estimate what percentage these purchases represent of the total purchases made for all golf courses in the United States. It is believed, however, that a

majority of the larger clubs furnished reports in the survey. Many clubs found it very difficult to estimate their annual purchases of the different kinds of seed because the purchases varied so much from year to year, depending largely upon whether new construction work was undertaken or extensive alterations were made on their courses or reseeding was necessary because of droughts, floods, or other reasons."

"Only a very small percentage of the clubs indicated," the report states, "that they intended to purchase or that they usually purchase bent stolons, and these clubs were situated mainly in Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Indiana. Many clubs, however, grow their own stolons and maintain their own bent turf nursery for use in repairing old greens. The most popular strain of bent stolons was indicated to be the Washington, but many clubs were using the Metropolitan."

Most of the purchases of rye grass seed, the survey showed, were made by clubs in Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi. In those states it is generally sown each fall on Bermuda grass greens for winter play. This explains the greater annual consumption of rye grasses as compared with strictly perennial grasses, such as Kentucky bluegrass, the bents, and redtop.

More Kentucky bluegrass seed was purchased by clubs in Illinois, Ohio, New York, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, than elsewhere.

Purchases of redtop seed were shown to be the largest in Illinois, New York, Ohio, Florida, Michigan, and Pennsylvania.

Purchases of fescue seeds were mainly by clubs in New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Ohio.

More bent seed was purchased by clubs in New York, Pennsylvania, California, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, than elsewhere.

Florida courses buy much more Bermuda grass and carpet grass seed than any other courses. South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and North Carolina courses trail far behind Florida in Bermuda grass purchases.

The relatively large amount of white clover purchased would seem to indicate that some clubs are buying it to deliberately sow on their courses, even though most greenkeepers, and others interested in golf courses, are willing to spend large sums of money to eradicate this pest on the golf course, and especially on the greens. It is possible that some of the white clover seed purchased is planted as part of seed mixtures in certain locations.

In spite of the fact that fall is generally considered to be the best time to sow grass seeds, the report shows that the heaviest seed purchases were made by clubs in the spring. This does not mean necessarily that they are planting this seed in the spring. Considering that a club needs new seeding and has an item for seed in its budget when this is made up in the spring, the usual plan is apparently to buy the seed then and carry it over until fall. It is possible that many seeds bought in the spring are intended for spring planting, but, due to procrastination, they are not planted until fall. Relatively small quantities are purchased during the months of May, June, and July.

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Judicious use of fertilizer will do more to thicken up a thin stand of grass than the best methods of reseeding.