

NEW GRASS VARIETIES

FOR THE SOUTH COASTAL REGION IN 2001

Farmers in the South Coastal Region will see some new grass variety names this spring when they plan their forage seedings. The new varieties include two orchardgrasses and three perennial ryegrasses. While the varieties have only recently been registered for sale in Canada, local testing goes back over ten years in the case of the orchardgrasses. The ryegrasses were evaluated more recently. This factsheet provides yields and relative maturity information for the new varieties based on trials conducted by ministry staff in co-operation with the B.C. Forage Council.

Orchardgrass

The new varieties are ProGress and Justus, both of which were tested in the same trials at Agassiz, Sumas Prairie and Sidney from 1988 – 1991. Yield data, compared to the check variety Sumas, appear in the table below. The average dry matter yield of Sumas over the trial period is also provided. Under each trial location is given the years in which the trial was harvested.

Variety	Yield as a % of Sumas		
	Agassiz (1989/90/91)	Sumas Prairie (1990/91)	Sidney (1990/91)
Justus	110	102	99
ProGress	110	105	97
Sumas	100 (12.6 t/ha)	100 (13.0 t/ha)	100 (14.4 t/ha)

Relative maturity, measured as the date at which each variety reached 50% heading, was recorded from single-row trials at Agassiz and Sidney. Results appear in the tables below.

Variety	Date of 50% Heading (Agassiz)	
	1990	1991
Pro-File*	May 7	May 15
ProGress	May 8	May 15
Justus	May 8	May 15
Sumas*	May 19	May 25

*Pro-File and Sumas are included as representative early and late varieties.

Forage

FACTSHEET



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COLUMBIA**

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B.C. Forage Council

Variety	Date of 50% Heading (Sidney)	
	1990	1991
Pro-File*	May 8	May 13
ProGress	May 14	May 16

*Pro-File is included as a reference variety; no data is available for Sumas or Justus.

Perennial Ryegrass

The new varieties are Vela, Feeder and Respect. All three are diploid types. Vela was tested at Chilliwack, Sumas Prairie and Sidney from 1993 – 1996. Yield data, compared to the check variety Frances, appear in the table below. The average dry matter yield of Frances over the trial period is also provided. Under each trial location is given the years in which the trial was harvested.

Variety	Yield as a % of Frances		
	Chilliwack (1994/95)	Sumas Prairie (1994/95)	Sidney (1994/95/96)
Vela	99	100	102
Frances	100 (14.7 t/ha)	100 (13.2 t/ha)	100 (13.8 t/ha)

Respect and Feeder were tested at Chilliwack, Matsqui and Sidney from 1997 – 1999. Yield data, compared to the check varieties Rosalin (for Respect) and Condesa (for Feeder) appear in the table below.

Variety	Yield as a % of Check Variety		
	Chilliwack (1998/99)	Matsqui (1998/99)	Sidney (1998/99)
Respect	109	113	99
Rosalin	100 (11.2 t/ha)	100 (10.5 t/ha)	100 (16.6 t/ha)
Feeder	105	97	99
Condesa	100 (10.6 t/ha)	100 (11.2 t/ha)	100 (15.5 t/ha)

Relative maturity, measured as the date at which each variety reached 50% heading, was recorded from single-row trials at Agassiz (for Vela) and Abbotsford (for Rosalin and Feeder). Results are given in the tables below.

Variety	Date of 50% Heading (Agassiz)*	
	1994	1995
Vela	May 7	May 9
Frances	May 7	May 10

*in 1994, the earliest date of 50% heading for all perennial ryegrass varieties was May 7 and the latest was June 10; in 1995, the comparable dates were May 1 and June 4.

Variety	Date of 50% Heading (Abbotsford)*		
	1998	1999	2000
Rosalin	May 8	May 23	May 15
Respect	May 9	May 23	May 15
Feeder	June 1	June 2	May 31
Condesa	past June 1**	past June 2**	June 6

*1998 was an early spring, with two weeks of hot weather starting about April 25; this tended to advance heading dates; 1999 and 2000 spring conditions were more normal; in 1998, the earliest date of 50% heading for all perennial ryegrass varieties was April 22; in 1999 it was April 28 and in 2000 April 24; in each of the three years, Condesa had among the latest dates of 50% heading.

**Condesa had not quite reached the 50% heading stage when it became necessary to trim the trial.

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Use of Named and Locally-Tested Varieties

The ministry has carried on a program of grass variety evaluation in the South Coastal Region since the late 1970s. Working in co-operation with local seed companies, many orchardgrass, tall fescue and perennial ryegrass varieties have been evaluated for yield, relative maturity, winter hardiness, disease resistance and other factors. Some of the best varieties from each trial have become registered for sale in Canada and seed has been made available to farmers by the companies. As a result, farmers can now choose from among a considerable number of named and locally-tested varieties when it comes to formulating their own seed mixes or evaluating those offered by the companies.

Given this choice, we would recommend two things to farmers. First, plant mixes that contain named varieties. That way, you know exactly what you have planted. If you like the mix, you can plant it another year knowing it will perform the same way. Second, use varieties that have been locally tested so that you know they will perform well in South Coastal conditions. Other varieties may perform satisfactorily, but you do not have any assurance.

If you would like to discuss these new grass varieties or any aspect of the use of named and locally-tested varieties, please contact either:

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