

## IMPORTED WEED CALLED THREAT TO TURF

A perennial weed being imported into the U.S. and other countries in foreign-grown seed has been called a threat to turf managers by an independent seed testing laboratory. Seven states have already placed the weed on their prohibited list, meaning that seed sold in these states must not contain any seed of the plant.

Dale Kern, president of Seed Technology of Marysville, OH, says there is no selective control for the grassy weed called serrated tussock. The clumpy weed spreads aggressively under dry conditions, as it has in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Argentina. It has recently been discovered in tall fescue, ryegrass and bermudagrass seed imported from these countries.

"Unfortunately, as we see more and more imported seed enter the country, serrated tussock may be only the tip of the iceberg," warns Kern. He points out that in Australia alone, 184 potentially serious weeds are known which are not currently prohibited as noxious weeds in the U.S. "It's more important than ever to keep prohibited weed lists updated," he adds.

Kern foresees a fivefold increase in imported seed over the next three years. One reason is the periodic banning of field burning, a process used by seed growers in the Pacific Northwest to clean their fields after harvest of debris, insects and diseases. "Seed producers have to turn overseas to get the growing flexibility and economic advantages they need," Kern states. "It's hard to quarrel with that if it keeps quality seed affordable."

Turf managers have several options to avoid planting seed contaminated by imported weeds, says Kern. The first is to press state officials to keep noxious weed lists updated. Another is to buy only certified seed with the tagged analysis still on the bag. Turf managers can also send seed to state or independent labs for testing.

"Nine-tenths of the battle is prevention," he states. "Some of these weeds may be very difficult or impossible to eradicate once they're in your turf."

## IBA INKS FIVE-YEAR DEAL WITH ASTROTURF

AstroTurf Industries, Inc., headquartered in Dalton, GA, and the International Baseball Association (IBA), based in Indianapolis, IN, have reached an agreement designating the company as the official supplier of synthetic turf to the IBA.

The IBA is the governing body of amateur baseball around the world. With its 65 member countries, it organizes the Olympic baseball tournament, Senior World Championships, Intercontinental Cup, President's Cup, and two annual world youth championships.

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620 Leshler Place  
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