

Elstel Farm & Seeds

“The Crabgrass Seed Folks”

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Fact Sheet 2011: ‘Quick-N-Big®’ Crabgrass Management “Pot-Shots”. (Seed List-Page 2)

Introduction: ‘Quick-N-Big®’ Crabgrass(QNBCG) has been available to producers five years in 2011. The first worldwide known crabgrass variety, ‘Red River’ Crabgrass (RRCG) , has been available to producers 20 years in 2011.

Positive Input From Producers about our crabgrasses is encouraging in our efforts to help forage and livestock producers, and land stewards of the USA. Grazier “A” said , “ People don’t understand, this Quick-N-Big crabgrass is not ordinary crabgrass”. This in a conversation about it’s quick seedling and young growth to grazing and it’s bigness on his pastures. Cattleman “B” wrote, “ I do love this Quick-N-Big Crabgrass.” This referencing how well it was doing in his pastures, and he has also had RRCG over 10 years to compare. Feedback “puts gas in our tank” and shows us producers are doing well with it .

Thinning too Thick Quick-N-Big and Red River Volunteer Crabgrass is sometimes needed. If this is a need in your stands, feel free to phone us to talk about it. Thinning is done on only very young stands.

Speed of Germination and Seedling Growth has always been a major interest with crabgrasses. Years ago, we did a RRCG germinator study of the responses of “New Crop “ versus “Aged” seed. New crop seed germinated 7% of it’s total capability in one week. Two & 3 year old Aged Seed germinated 58% of it’s capability in the same time, or, over 8 times more. We recommend using Aged Seed when possible.

Recently, Wade Kravanik of the Oklahoma Dept. of Agri. , Seed Laboratory, helped do a germination and early seedling growth germinator study of QNBCG and RRCG seeds to compare these varieties. General field responses had been observed, but laboratory details were desired. Composite samples of each variety of the same age 2 and 3 year old aged seed were used. Precise readings were done daily at 1 to 5 days. The test ended at 14 days. It is not realistic to give full details herein , but an abstract follows.

Germination is presented as relative % of total germination (germinable seed) at day 14. The 2 grasses had 11 % to 16 % germination at a cool 59°F by day 4 and 5. At a cool 68°F only QNBCG had some germination at day 3, and % of germinable seed was 91 % to 94 % at day 4 and 5. This was 32% better than RRCG on those cool days. This indicates QNBCG can germinate equal to or much better than RRCG at cool soil conditions. Both grasses germinated well at 77°F with 93% to 97% at days 4 and 5. At the “Official Germination Temperatures” of variable 68°F to 95°F, total germinable seed for both grasses was 95% to 99% on days 4 and 5. At temperatures of 77°F to 100°F, the grasses had 23% to 64 % germinable seed on day 1, and total germinable seed was 93% to 99 % by days 4 and 5. RRCG averaged 62% germinable seed the first 3 days at 77°F to 100°F, and QNBCG averaged 71%, or 16% better than RRCG, indicating QNBCG also germinates faster at the warmer temperatures. Cooler & quicker germination is quicker pasture. Seedling growth the first 5 days comes from the seed energy, not the sun. At temperatures of 77°F to 100°F on days 3 to 5, RRCG seedlings averaged 0.6 inches tall. QNBCG averaged 0.8 inches tall, or 33% taller than RRCG. Taller seedlings make quicker pasture.

Controlling Sandbur in some crabgrass fields of the Plains and Southern US is a problem. Sandbur is a low value weedy grass forage with massive amounts of extremely thorny, “unpalatable” seeds. Growing conditions are essentially as for crabgrass. There is no quick, easy way to control sandbur in crabgrass. We had a field of RRCG on sandy soil in Western Oklahoma get invaded by sandbur seed from roadside and fence row sandbur stands. Had the problem been seen sooner, we could have sprayed the fence rows, road edges, and field edges, and kept the sandbur at bay a longer time. In other cases, deep moldboard plowing to bury the sandbur seeds, followed by roller-packing to re-firm the seedbed, followed by a very shallow drilled crabgrass seed planting kept the sandbur at bay for years. The soil was not tilled after the plowing to leave more sandbur seeds buried deep. In other cases, summer tillage and /or herbicide spraying to control the sandbur for at least 1 to 2 summers is a big help. All methods are time consuming and relatively expensive, but other summer and winter forage can be grown on the land in the process.

During 2010, we planted the prior mentioned sandbur infested RRCG field to a “Round-up Ready Corn” for grazing. This allowed spraying the field for sandbur kill and seed reduction. In summary, the corn was planted in 24 inch rows with a common grass drill with fluted seed feeds after frost in early spring. The drill was calibrated to plant about 2 to 3 corn seeds per foot of row. The field was top-dressed with nitrogen at 75 pounds actual nitrogen immediately after planting. This planting was in the 26 inch precipitation zone. The corn grew to average about 7 feet tall at tasseling stage and initial grazing. Round-Up (glyphosate) herbicide spraying for sandbur control was done two times before the corn was too tall (four to five feet tall or less). Grazing was by strip grazing technique with grazing periods averaging about 3 days. It is best to graze corn in 1 day or less strips, but this was not feasible on our farm. Too many jobs at one time. Our 3 day grazing period system worked well for us as there was never a back fence and the steers continued to graze leaves and stems on the whole area already grazed. This worked well. This approach was excellent for controlling sandbur and getting relatively high volume grazing at the same time. The cleaned area is in no-til wheat and is planned to be re-planted to the QNB or RR crabgrass varieties in spring 2011. This technique could be used to control other unwanted summer grasses in a crabgrass field.

Soil Conservation Plantings can be mixtures, and for us those mixtures include QNBCG or RRCG. We wrote some about this in Fact Sheet 2010. We do these plantings on hilly, sloping, or flatter pasture lands, terraces, pond dikes, waterways, spillways, roadsides, and equipment yards, etc. Others have done this on newly clear-cut forest lands, etc. Our equipment parking lot and barnyard area is on erodible sandy soil and it was planted to better soil cover in June, 2010. The area was tilled to prepare and smooth the soil, then it was sprigged with Midland Bermudagrass at about 60 bushels per acre, then it was broadcast seeded with 3 to 5 pounds per acre of QNBCG in a complete fertilizer mix. Then the area was firmed with a homemade roller and topdressed with nitrogen. It was then watered with yard water sprinklers. On the day 2 after watering started, the first QNBCG seedlings had emerged. This is among the quickest we have seen this “quick” grass emerge in fields. The mass emerged over the next week or more. The soil was under control in about 2 to 3 weeks. Bermudagrass emerged over a period of several weeks and spread during summer. The area was mowed 4 times during summer. Each mowing could have been a grazing. By summers end, the QNBCG was still there as a soil cover, and there were bermudagrass colonies about every 2 feet. They will spread. It was a success. QNBCG can be an excellent addition to conservation vegetation mixtures.

2011 CRABGRASS SEED LIST (Certified, Aged Seed)*

Seed Variety & Information	Seed Price Per Net Pound, FOB, Oklahoma*	
Quick-N-Big, Non-Certified	Ask	
Quick-N-Big, AGED, Certified	\$6.00	DEALER
<i>(Please Note: ‘Quick-N-Big@’ Crabgrass is a Proprietary Variety of Elstel Farm and Seeds)</i>		
Red River, Non-Certified	Ask	AVAILABLE
Red River, AGED, Certified	\$6.00	

*If seed test results are lower than 80% germination, seed is priced on a pure-live-seed basis. We can help you locate other seeds at your request. **MINIMUM ORDER IS 10 POUNDS;** if you need less contact us anyway. When you ship to a “town business” address, the freight is less. **Feel free to request other free Fact Sheets.** Also go to: our web site www.redrivercrabgrass.com and also www.noble.org and search for “crabgrass publications” in the agriculture area. (2-2-11).

