

2003 NTEP Fineleaf Fescue Test – 2007 Results

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Objective

To evaluate commercial and experimental varieties of fineleaf fescues under low maintenance conditions in central Indiana.

Rationale

Fineleaf fescues are commonly used in a variety of situations ranging from shade tolerant lawn mixtures to rarely mown golf course deep roughs. Attributes such as good drought, good cold tolerance and good to excellent shade tolerance lend their use to many turf sites. With the development of new varieties, local evaluation is beneficial when choosing varieties for Indiana.

How It Was Done

Fifty-three varieties of fineleaf fescues were seeded on 11 Sep 2003 at the William H. Daniel Research and Diagnostic Center on a silt loam soil. Seeding rate was 4.4 lbs per 1000 ft² and seed was spread using a hand shaker jar. After seeding the experiment was lightly raked and a starter fertilizer (8-22-16) was applied at the rate of 1.5 lbs P₂O₅ per 1000 ft². The area was covered with a germination blanket following seeding to prevent washing of seed and mixing of varieties.

Plots were maintained under a low maintenance regime. The mowing height was 2.0 inches, mowed 2x per week. The annual fertilization was 2.0 lbs. N per 1000 ft² with 1 lb in mid-September, and 1.0 lb. in early November. Irrigation was applied to prevent dormancy.

Data collected in 2007 included genetic color, spring greenup, and visual quality ratings from May to Oct. All data taken were visual observations of turf characteristics and performance. Visual color and green-up ratings were taken using a scale of 1 to 9 with 1 = light green or dormant and 9 = dark green turf. Visual quality ratings were taken using a scale of 1 to 9 with 1 = no living turf, 5 = acceptable turf, and 9 = ideal turf.

Results to Date

- There are no statistical differences in average visual quality among the top 17 cultivars (Table 1). Cultivars are listed by decreasing mean quality for 2007.
- When making cultivar selections, it is best to consult the NTEP web page at www.ntep.org for complete performance data from around the country on cultivars, placing special emphasis on how cultivars perform in IN, IL, KY, MI and/or OH (depending if you are located in northern, central, or southern IN) under the specific maintenance regime you intend for that grass.

Table 1. Visual quality, color and spring greenup of 53 fineleaf fescues cultivars growing under low maintenance in 2007.

Cultivar	Type	Visual quality ^a								Genetic Color ^b	Spring greenup ^c
		Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Mean		
Fortitude	strong creeping	7.0	7.0	6.7	6.3	6.7	6.3	7.3	6.8	7.0	6.3
Epic	strong creeping	7.3	8.0	7.0	6.7	5.7	5.0	6.0	6.5	6.3	5.7
DP 77-9360	strong creeping	6.7	7.0	6.7	6.3	6.0	6.3	6.3	6.5	7.3	5.7
DLF-RCM	strong creeping	6.3	7.3	6.7	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.3	6.4	7.0	4.7
Celestial	strong creeping	6.7	6.7	6.3	5.3	6.0	6.0	7.3	6.3	7.7	6.0
PST-8000	strong creeping	7.0	7.0	6.7	6.3	6.0	5.3	6.0	6.3	7.3	4.3
Cardinal	strong creeping	7.3	7.7	6.7	6.0	5.3	5.0	6.0	6.3	7.0	5.3
Garnet	strong creeping	6.3	6.7	6.0	6.0	5.7	6.0	7.3	6.3	7.7	6.7
SR 5130	chewings	7.0	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.0	4.7	6.3	6.3	8.0	5.3
IS-FL 28	hard	6.3	6.0	6.3	6.0	6.0	6.0	7.0	6.2	7.0	4.3
IS-FRR 29	strong creeping	6.7	6.7	6.7	5.7	6.0	5.7	6.3	6.2	7.3	5.0
DP 77-9885	strong creeping	7.7	6.7	6.7	6.0	5.3	4.3	6.3	6.1	8.3	5.3
Wendy Jean	strong creeping	6.0	6.7	6.3	6.0	5.7	5.3	6.7	6.1	6.7	6.0
PST-4TZ	chewings	7.3	6.3	6.7	6.0	5.3	4.7	5.7	6.0	7.7	5.7
Berkshire	hard	6.0	5.3	5.7	5.7	5.7	6.0	7.3	6.0	7.3	5.3
DP 77-9578	strong creeping	6.0	6.3	6.3	6.0	5.3	5.0	6.7	6.0	7.0	5.3
Reliant IV	hard	6.0	5.7	6.0	5.3	6.0	6.0	6.7	6.0	7.0	4.7
IS-FRC 17	chewings	7.3	6.3	6.3	6.0	5.3	4.0	5.7	5.9	7.7	6.0
Ambassador	chewings	6.7	6.7	6.0	4.3	5.3	5.3	6.3	5.8	7.3	5.7
BMXC-S02	strong creeping	6.0	6.3	6.3	5.7	5.3	5.3	5.7	5.8	7.0	5.7
Spartan II	hard	6.0	5.7	5.7	5.3	5.7	5.3	6.7	5.8	7.7	5.0
Splendor	strong creeping	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.0	4.7	4.7	6.0	5.8	7.7	5.0
TL1	strong creeping	6.0	5.3	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.3	6.3	5.7	7.0	7.0
C-SMX	strong creeping	5.3	5.7	5.7	5.3	5.3	5.7	7.0	5.7	7.3	6.0
DP 77-9579	strong creeping	6.7	6.7	6.3	5.0	4.7	4.7	6.0	5.7	7.3	5.0
Zodiac	chewings	7.0	6.0	6.3	5.0	4.7	4.3	6.0	5.6	7.3	6.3
Firefly	hard	6.0	5.7	5.3	4.7	5.0	5.7	6.7	5.6	6.7	4.7
Longfellow II	chewings	6.7	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.0	4.7	6.3	5.5	7.7	5.3

Compass	chewings	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.3	5.0	3.3	5.7	5.5	8.3	6.3
J-5	chewings	6.3	5.7	5.7	5.3	5.0	4.0	6.3	5.5	7.0	6.0
Pathfinder	strong creeping	5.0	5.7	5.3	5.0	5.3	5.7	6.3	5.5	7.0	5.0
Oxford	hard	5.3	4.3	5.0	5.3	5.7	5.3	6.7	5.4	7.0	5.3
Culumbra II	chewings	7.3	7.0	6.3	4.7	4.0	3.3	4.7	5.3	8.0	4.7
DP 77-9886	chewings	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.3	4.7	4.0	6.0	5.3	7.0	5.7
SRX 55R	slender creeping	6.3	5.3	5.3	5.0	5.0	4.3	5.7	5.3	5.7	5.3
7 Seas	chewings	6.7	5.7	6.0	5.7	4.3	3.3	4.7	5.2	7.3	6.3
Cascade	chewings	5.7	5.0	5.0	5.3	5.0	4.3	5.3	5.1	6.0	5.7
Oracle	strong creeping	6.3	6.0	5.3	3.7	4.3	4.3	5.3	5.0	5.7	6.3
Razor	strong creeping	5.3	5.3	5.0	4.0	4.3	4.7	6.7	5.0	7.7	6.3
Musica	strong creeping	6.3	5.7	5.7	4.3	4.3	3.7	5.0	5.0	6.3	5.7
Predator	hard	5.7	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.3	5.3	5.0	7.0	4.7
Audubon	strong creeping	5.3	5.0	4.3	4.3	4.7	4.7	5.7	4.9	7.3	6.0
IS-FRR 23	strong creeping	4.0	4.7	4.7	4.0	4.7	5.0	6.7	4.8	7.3	5.3
Jasper II	strong creeping	5.0	5.3	4.7	3.3	4.3	4.7	6.3	4.8	7.3	6.7
SR 3000	hard	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	5.0	4.3	5.7	4.8	6.0	4.7
Shademaster	strong creeping	4.7	4.7	4.7	3.7	5.0	5.3	5.3	4.8	5.3	5.7
C03-4676	strong creeping	4.0	4.7	4.3	3.3	4.3	5.0	6.7	4.6	7.7	5.3
Scaldis	hard	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.7	4.3	5.7	4.6	7.0	5.3
SRX 3K	hard	5.3	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	3.7	5.7	4.5	7.0	5.3
Seabreeze	slender creeping	5.0	4.0	4.3	4.7	3.7	3.7	4.7	4.3	5.3	5.3
Boreal	strong creeping	3.7	4.3	4.3	3.7	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.1	6.0	5.3
Dawson E	slender creeping	4.7	4.7	4.3	3.7	3.3	3.3	4.3	4.0	4.7	5.7
Quatro	sheep	4.7	3.0	3.3	4.0	3.7	3.3	4.0	3.7	6.3	5.7
LSD (0.05)		1.5	1.5	1.3	1.6	1.1	1.3	1.5	0.8	0.8	1.3

^a Visual quality ratings were taken using a scale of 1 to 9 with 1 = no living turf, 5 = acceptable turf, and 9 = ideal turf.

^b Color was rated on a scale of 1 to 9 where 1 = light green and 9 = dark green.

^c Spring greenup was rated on a scale of 1 to 9 where 1 = dormant and 9 = dark green.