WEED CONTROL WITH TURFGRASS CULTIVARS

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Crabgrass is one of the major weed species in much of the turfgrass in the United States. Crabgrass (hairy or large crabgrass and smooth crabgrass) is found in either new or established turf. Often it invades turfgrass when there is an open gap for weeds to establish. Once it has seeded there is additional opportunity for spread in the turf. Preemergence herbicides have been the principal defense against crabgrass. Several herbicides (Betasan, DCPA, Balan, trifluralin, pendimethalin, Ronstar) have given control of crabgrass and are often used once per year to control crabgrass.

A project was started in 1989 to evaluate cultivars of ryegrass, fescue and bluegrass for suppression of the invasion of large crabgrass. Bluegrass was less effective than ryegrass which was also less effective than fescue to suppress large crabgrass. The cultivars Fawn, Olympic, Rebal and Bonsai have been further evaluated and found to be very effective for large crabgrass control. No cultivar has been totally effective for crabgrass control when planted together in the spring. Fall planting of these species appears to be effective for spring control. Additional data will be presented on competition trials.