

Jacklin Seed's Introduction of My Holiday Lawn™ Dramatically Reduces the Need for Mowing



Grass plugs extracted from one-year-old turf plots that had not been mowed for one month prior. Under these conditions, the common type variety grows vertically similar to a pasture grass. Even with the improved variety, you notice a lot of browning on the shoots below the mowing height with green foliage up above. With the My Holiday Lawn™ variety even the bases are green and the foliage is kept mainly below the mowing height.



Dr. Doug Brede, director of research and development at Jacklin Seed, examines test plots of My Holiday Lawn™ grass. The new grass has a low-growing canopy that allows for significant reduction in mowing.

If you have a yard, you know that one thing is synonymous with summer – mowing.

Being able to enjoy a lush lawn is something everyone looks forward to, but frequent mowing can quickly diminish that enjoyment.

Reducing the frequency of mowing has been a long desired trait in grass varieties and this spring, Simplot's Jacklin Seed division introduced a new grass that can potentially reduce the need to mow from once or twice a week to just monthly.

The new series of grasses is aptly dubbed My Holiday Lawn™ because it lets you take a holiday from frequent lawn mowing.

My Holiday Lawn™ has a low-growing canopy and the grass maintains green leaves below the mowing height even when left unmown for weeks. When it is mowed, the new growth is only partially removed, keeping the lawn looking fresh and green.

"The really good news is that in addition to its compact canopy, My Holiday Lawn™ is beautiful turf," says Dr. Doug Brede, director of research and development at Jacklin Seed. "It will likely be the most attractive lawn on the

block. You'll enjoy less mowing, along with a lush, fine leaved, dark green stand of grass."

Brede started working on the development of My Holiday Lawn™ 14-years ago at Jacklin's Post Falls, Idaho, research facility.

Developing a grass variety that doesn't need mowing has long been a wish for homeowners.

Arden Jacklin, who founded Jacklin Seed in 1936, always said that was one of the most frequent requests when he was asked questions.

Jacklin knew that a non-growing grass wasn't realistic because grass had to grow or it wouldn't be able to heal from normal wear and tear. The challenge was developing a grass that would still be healthy and be able to handle the wear and tear, but not grow at a rate of traditional grasses.

Brede said the possibility of low-growing grasses was first discovered when he saw some curious plants growing in his breeding nursery.

"In plant breeding, oftentimes serendipity is the mother of invention," he says.

In 2002, Brede assembled a lawn trial containing plots of all the dwarf mutants he could locate at the time. It was a small trial of only 40 entries intended as a proof of concept.

Brede said the initial results were less than desirable.

"The grasses looked dismal under infrequent mowing," he said. "They just weren't pretty."

But Brede didn't give up. He expanded his trials by using several larger aging turf quality trials as source-material for infrequent-mow varieties.

Expanding the trial worked amazingly well. In all, Brede tested 10,000 plots that were mowed just a few times a year.

"We rated the plots as we normally would, with a rating of 1 being undesirable, 5 being minimally acceptable, and 9 being get-down-on-your-knees-and-kiss-the-grass beautiful," he says. "And believe it or not, out of 10,000 plots there were a handful that got me down on my knees."

The selected varieties for My Holiday Lawn™ are somewhat shorter than a typical Kentucky bluegrass plant, but they are not miniature or dwarf.

Since its introduction in January, sales of My Holiday Lawn™ seed sales have been brisk.

In the Boise area, My Holiday Lawn™ is being grown at two sod farms for 2016 sales. Seed is available from Simplot Partners in Caldwell. My Holiday Lawn is planned for the outdoor facilities at the Jack's Urban Meeting Place (JUMP) project. More information can be found at www.myHolidayLawn.com.



Simplot employee, Julie Tobler, volunteered to be the home lawn guinea pig for My Holiday Lawn™. Researchers killed her existing lawn of clover and dandelion and seeded it to My Holiday Lawn. Julie says it's the nicest looking lawn on her street.