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AGRONOMY NOTES

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Prepared by Department of Agronomy, College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky

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CERTIFIED SEED OF KENBLUE KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS SEED AVAILABLE

A limited quantity of certified seed of Kenblue, a new variety of Kentucky bluegrass, will be available this fall. Kenblue was developed last year and officially released July 31, 1967 by the University of Kentucky and the USDA-ARS.

Kenblue is more insect- and disease-resistant than any of the other named varieties of bluegrass. Its adaptability to Kentucky conditions is also much higher, because Kenblue was developed from seed taken from 12 farms in seven Central Kentucky counties where bluegrass is normally grown for seed purposes. In each case, fields from which the seed was taken had been in seed production a minimum of 8 years and a maximum of 15 years.

The selected seed was blended by the agronomists at the University of Kentucky, and a portion of it was kept by the University to produce the certified seed. A smaller amount was kept by the UK breeders to be sown at the UK farm in Lexington and maintained as a permanent breeders' seed block.

Native Kentucky bluegrass has never before been certified as a variety because seed sources were never definitely known. However, the new system used last year (selection from the 12 farms and careful blending) makes the seed source known now. "All Kenblue certified seed of the future will trace back to our breeders' seed block," report the agronomists.

The certified seed to be offered this fall (25,000 pounds approximately) will be sold by or through regular retail seed outlets.

Kenblue certified bluegrass was developed because no named varieties of bluegrass performed as well as the Kentucky-grown bluegrass. This performance by the other named varieties was poorer in Kentucky, as well as in some of the surrounding states. For that reason, it was felt that a certified Kentucky bluegrass seed variety was needed.

When there were larger supplies of named bluegrass varieties than wanted, much of it was sold sometimes as Kentucky common bluegrass. With the new variety Kenblue, however, we are preserving a pool of germ plasm in Central Kentucky (from known sources) and can guarantee buyers a well-adapted bluegrass.

Foundation seed for the production of certified seed of Kenblue may be obtained by applying to the Kentucky Foundation Seed Project, 744 Press Avenue, Lexington, Kentucky 40508.

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