

# AmpacImpact

January 2005

A Quarterly News Publication

## Welcome to 2005

I hope everyone had an excellent Holiday Season. Before we get into what is new for 2005 I would like to reflect on the year 2004 and take this opportunity to thank each of you for your part in making 2004 a successful year for AMPAC.

2004 started with a lot of changes at AMPAC. Most of you know that AMPAC hired a new General Manager and Northeast Sale Representative in January. What you may not know is that we also hired a new office assistant, Konrad Kriball midway through the year. Konrad was formally employed by AMPAC before leaving to pursue other interest. We are glad to have him back on our team again. Questions regarding analysis tags, tech sheets, brochures, etc... can be sent to him directly at [konrad@ampacseed.com](mailto:konrad@ampacseed.com) or you can call him at 1-800-547-3230. Not only were new faces added to AMPAC in 2004 but there were also new products.

AMPAC was excited to fully commercialize Cochise III Tall Fescue and Delaware XL Perennial Ryegrass. Both varieties continue to perform exceptionally well and are part of AMPAC's commitment to continue strengthening our turf line up. We were proud to introduce the Perfect Fit Forage Brassica™ brand, which encompasses all of the brassicas from Wrightsons Seeds. Oasis Forage Chicory has been a

great addition to our product line in 2004 and is an indication of AMPAC's continued commitment to the forage seed market.

There were also a few changes to our Pasture Perfect program as well. We have revamped the Pasture Perfect brochure to make it more user-friendly. The new brochure has extra space for a short description of each mixture. Thus making it easier to identify which mix is right for a particular situation. These were the key changes for 2004, now on to 2005.

For starters we are excited to bring you a revamped Turf Perfect logo and bag design. This new Turf Perfect logo has an exciting new look. The bags will allow for the same customized approach as the old bags but have a more professional appearance.



# Welcome to 2005



Along with the new Turf Perfect program AMPAC is proud to introduce Wildlife Perfect (more on that in Scott's Corner of the AMPAC Impact). AMPAC will continue to add new varieties to our product line up. Without getting to far ahead of ourselves, you can expect the introduction of a new Turf Type Perennial Ryegrass, Turf Type Tall Fescue, and new forages. One of the new forages to look for will be the successor to Radiant Alfalfa. Look to your AMPAC sales representative to keep you informed of other new products as we head into the 2005. As we kick off this New Year we don't foresee any large price swings. We will however see price trends as species cycle through supply and demand curves. Of course a crop failure could change all of that. However, most all the crops in Oregon look very good at this time. Although we are still behind in our total rainfall, we received some timely rains earlier in the fall. Harvest reports out of New Zealand are mixed. They have had rains at the beginning of harvest leading some to say that grass yields are off. I do know that this last week they had excellent harvesting conditions however. With the New Zealand dollar being at its highest point in recent years, look for

anything coming from "Down Under" to be high priced this spring. We look forward to working with you and wish all of you a great and prospers 2005.

## Dave's Corner

Over the past ten years there has been quite a change in the mindset of many folks about how to make a profit on the farm. When our farming operation was in full operation in the late 70's until the early 90's we often had the attitude that we should get highest production "at any cost." That does not mean that we just threw money at every *new fangled* idea or "dumped" fertilizer on if we needed it or not; but, we believed that we needed to have more bushels/acre to be most profitable. While that thinking is not totally flawed, it is not necessarily the ideal either. When I worked closely with the Amish dairy producers in Northern Indiana in the mid and late 90's I was exposed to a different way of thinking on this matter. Their idea was to always have "profitable production," or "optimum production," which usually did not equal "maximum production." As seedsmen, how do we help people attain "profitable" or "optimum" production? Our goal at Ampac is to help the producers have more tools that can help them be more profitable. With the line-up Ampac has of improved legumes, brassicas, and forage grasses we can help you fill their tool box! This quarter's "Dave's Corner" will provide some ideas of how these tools work.

## Dave's Corner

One way we can help producers is to sell them improved products that deliver more protein/acre for their animals. Being an “order taker” for VNS forages is easy; whoever has the cheapest price “wins”! Helping a producer to see that paying for an improved variety takes time and effort. Yet, the rewards are often astonishing.

Let's use alfalfa as an example.

**Radiant** continues to be Ampac's “Work-Horse” variety and has become the alfalfa variety of choice for dairy farmers in some regions, and with good reason. Floyd Yoder, a dairy producer near Middlebury, Indiana has averaged 7 tons DM/acre each of the past two years on his fields of Radiant and nearly every cutting have made “dairy quality” hay (RFV 150+). In the three forage quality tests I have seen, the average crude protein has been 25.39% with an average RFV of 165.33 (range of 136-208). What is noteworthy is that one of the cuttings tested had been rained on before it was harvested and tested. I have seen better results from tests at research stations but for an “*on the farm, real-life, come rain or shine for a whole field or two*” type of test these are great results! Floyd tried VNS alfalfa and varieties

from other companies over the past few years and was not at all happy. Floyd gets more tonnage and more protein per acre by using Radiant than using the “cheap seed” and knows there “are no good deals on cheap seed.” When approached about planting other varieties of alfalfa Floyd says “*just give me Radiant!*”

### Grow More Protein per Acre

Another way to grow protein is to use clovers in pastures. Beef and dairy producers should have 30-40% of their pasture sward mix to be clover. Dr. Garry Lacefield from the University of Kentucky has shown that it costs a producer between \$300-400/acre to use VNS red clover instead of a good improved clover. StarFire Red Clover continues to shine in trials and on the farm. By growing an improved high quality alfalfa and an improved red clover a producer can become much more profitable.

### Grow Crops that Extend the Grazing Season

The benefits from grazing late into the season are even more exciting! I traveled with Andrew Dumbleton (from Wrightson Seeds, LTd. NZ) just before Thanksgiving and was able to learn more about how to utilize our Perfect Fit

Forage Brassica<sup>SM</sup>. Grazing Appin Turnips, Maris Kestral Kale, Bonar Rape, and stockpiled Tall Fescue as fall and winter feed can replace hauling lots of hay in the cold of winter. The biggest complaint I hear is that producers don't want to be “out in the weather moving cattle or fences in the winter.” But the

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biggest complaint I hear from hay feeders is that guys don't like "to move hay bales in the wintertime!" One way or the other, there is work that has to be done in the winter; the question then is what kind of work is profitable? Ask Cliff Schuette in Breese, IL or Terry Becherer in nearby Trenton, IL and they will tell you that moving animals that are grazing is *always* more profitable. Ed Ballard, a retired animal specialist from the University of Illinois, has done a considerable amount of work measuring DM yield and forage quality of late-summer planted Oats, cereal rye, and Appin Turnips. What he has found is that there are great opportunities for producers to cut their wintering feed costs dramatically and raise their profits significantly. Ed's work shows that in the past few winters it has cost Cliff about \$0.24 per day per cow to graze oats and turnips. If he were feeding hay the cost would be nearly three times that, plus the cost of hauling the hay and manure! In the winter of 2000 Cliff saved \$143/cow in total feed costs, just because he was able to graze turnips and graze stockpiled fescue.

How do they accomplish this? By flying Appin and cereal grains into their standing corn, or no-tilling Appin and the cereal grains after the corn is harvested. Also Appin or Pasja can be planted after wheat or oats are harvested and grazed from 35-50 days up into the winter. Bonar Forage Rape can be planted then too but grazed after a frost. How far into the winter can you graze brassicas? I'm glad you asked...

I was on a dairy farm Dec 15, 2004 in northern Indiana. At 9:30 AM it was 12°F and there was 5-6" of snow on the

ground. Out in the cold and snow and wind there were 21 dairy cows grazing turnips! The farmer moves a hot wire 3 foot every 12 hours across his field that is approximately 1,100 foot long. The 21 cows get turnips, 8-10 square bales of hay, ~500# of corn silage and 8# of grain a day. The farmers butter fat and milk solids are better now that they were all fall long. And, his milk production is steady with what it was in October before he started grazing his Appin. This is one satisfied dairy farmer...and he's profitable! He believes he has enough turnips to graze until after Christmas and wishes there was another 7 acre field to start grazing after the new year.

Another producer in southern Indiana, nearly 5 hours south of the dairy farmer, is a beef farmer who is grazing turnips. He is not strip grazing so he is having more wastage. Even at that he has fed 50 less 1,600# bales of hay than he traditionally has fed by Dec 11. That is remarkable, and again profitable. Every day that a producer can go with out feeding a stored feed (or feeding dramatically less stored feed) is a profitable day.

In Wisconsin we are working with the Central Wisconsin Graziers through Conservation Specialist Paul Daigle on clover and brassica mixes. The forage quality data he sent me was off the charts! A mix of Perfect Fit Kura Clover, Kopu II White Clover, StarFire Red Clover, Bonar Forage Rape and Pasja tested at 15.81% protein, 17% NDF and a RFQ rating of 483! This was planted in spring for the purpose grazing

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in the fall and winter of 2004-05 and the clovers for future grazings. The grazier fed dry hay to keep the fiber level in the rumen healthy and keep the cattle from not being too loose.

One area that we should investigate further is the use of our kale and swedes. Andrew Dumbleton showed me photos from Northern Scotland of a producer standing in waist-deep Maris Kestral Kale. He showed another photo of sheep in a large field of swedes that would feed them all winter. These crops need to be planted in the early spring for the purpose of feeding them the next late-fall/winter. These are not quick growing crops but very high yielding-as much as 10 tons DM/acre.

We have a new link on our web site provided by Andrew from Wrightson at <http://www.ampacseed.com/BrassicaWinteringPaperSIDEJune2003.htm> . This an article further discussing the opportunities of winter grazing brassicas that I believe you will find quite interesting. Space does not allow for an in-depth discussion on stockpiling tall fescue but all producers should be aware of the possibilities of cost savings and gaining profit.

Now you have some more information to help sell the tools to help producers be more profitable. From my family to yours have a Happy, Blessed, and Profitable New Year!



Whether grazing beef cattle in Northern Wisconsin (above) or dairy cattle in northern Indiana (below); brassicas provide a tremendous amount of feed for wintertime grazing.



## Scott's Corner



I would like to first start out by saying Happy New Year to all of you! I thank you all for making my first year with AMPAC successful and a great learning experience! It is my pleasure to announce on behalf of AMPAC our new line of seed. **WILDLIFE PERFECT!**

At AMPAC we have listened to you and have heard that you were looking for a wildlife food plot line to market. Wildlife food plots are being sown for hunting purposes, viewing nature, and homeowners who purchase a tract of land that they do not want to spend all weekend mowing. Wildlife Food Plots are the rage in the outdoor industry and more and more folks want to plant something to **ATTRACT THE WILD!** Most outdoor enthusiasts are willing to go the extra mile and research the varieties and mixtures. In the past, individuals would purchase seed from the "Big Box Stores" and plant mixtures *with varieties not adapted to their region.* We all know what type of success occurs when this happens. At AMPAC we can provide varieties that are adapted to each growing region. By working closely with you we can develop the mixtures that the outdoor enthusiast will have the confidence in and market it in **WILDLIFE PERFECT**

bags and help you sell the product with informative brochures.

AMPAC has developed new bags with our **WILDLIFE PERFECT** logo on them that range in size from 3 pound to 20 pound bags. The bags are available to you with a mixture that can be developed for your area using AMPAC's improved varieties. The same great varieties we recommend to you for your forage needs can be used for wildlife food plots.

So give us a call today to discuss the endless possibilities of **WILDLIFE PERFECT!** Then get out there and start **ATTRACTING the WILD!**