REGISTRATION OF VARIETIES AND STRAINS OF GRASSES, I

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The breeding and improvement of grasses in the United States received little attention previous to 1930 with the exception of selection work with some grasses such as timothy, orchard grass, meadow fescue, and reed canary grass. Previous to 1930 most of the grass research work was directed chiefly to problems of culture and management. Organized and intensive grass breeding programs with both cultivated and native grasses were started in 1935 with the inauguration of cooperative programs between many state experiment stations and the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture.

More than 70 different cultivated, introduced, and native grass species are included in this work. Difference in latitudinal adaptation within many species of both cultivated and native grasses has occurred as a result of natural selection. Most of the grasses are cross pollinated and wide variations occur within the different species which offer opportunities for development of superior strains either by selection or hybridization.

In 1941 cooperative Uniform Grass Nurseries were started to determine the regional adaptation and to evaluate the superior qualities of the more promising strains previous to general distribution. Sixty-six nurseries were established in 41 states, most of which were located at state and federal experiment stations.

Enough progress has now been made in the development of superior strains to demonstrate the need for giving attention to methods of increasing and maintaining the genetic purity of new varieties as they become available for commercial use. Since the seed or plant characters of improved strains may not be different in appearance from commercial seed or plants, the need for seed certification is evident, requiring integrated work between grass breeder, crop improvement associations, seed producer and dealer to insure the maintenance and distribution of the superior varieties.

ALTA FECSUE, REG. NO. I

Alta fescue, a variety of tall fescue, Festuca elatior L. var. arundinacea (Schreb.) Wimm., originated as a plant selection in 1923. The selection was made from a 4-year-old planting of tall fescue

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