REGISTRATION OF WALSH WESTERN WHEATGRASS

‘Walsh’ western wheatgrass [Pascopyrum smithii (\textit{= Agropyron smithii} Rydb.)] (Reg. no. 15) was developed at the Agriculture Canada Research Station, Lethbridge, Alberta (2). It was tested experimentally as L2381 and was licensed for use in Canada on 4 Feb. 1982.

Walsh is a 20-clone synthetic resulting from a selection program of 468 ecotypes collected in 1968 and 1969. It was intended for use in the northern Great Plains and western United States and Canada from the latter three generations under the experimental designation Mandan 456. In 1982, 300 ramets were dug from a 0.5 ha increase field to establish an isolated crossing block to produce syn 1 generation seed. The 20 clones were also grown under isolation and selected crossing block to produce syn 1 generation seed. The 20 clones were then cross-pollinated and open-pollinated seed increase generations with field size ranging from 0.25 to 0.5 ha. Natural selection favored upland types with drought tolerance. Minor artificial selection was practiced during this time by roguing agronomically undesirable plants. Seed was distributed for testing in the northern Great Plains and western United States and Canada from the latter three generations under the experimental designation Mandan 456. In 1982, 300 ramets were dug from a 0.5 ha increase field to establish an isolated breeder seed plot that would maintain integrity of the tested materials and ensure adequate supply of breeder seed stock.

Rodan is rhizomatous and forms a dense blue-green sward. Leaves are less heavily veined and thinner than other western wheatgrass cultivars. In 58 replicated trials, Rodan has yielded an average of 200 kg/ha more forage than other western wheatgrass cultivars. Rodan is similar to ‘Rosana’ in area of adaptation but is more productive than Rosana on coarse-textured soils. Primary area of use will be the northern Great Plains consisting of the western Dakotas, eastern Montana, and eastern Wyoming in the USA and the Prairie Provinces of Canada. Rodan seed has a short maturation and Certified seed will be handled by SeCan Assoc., 885 Meadowlands Dr., Suite 512, Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3N2.

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References and Notes