REGISTRATION OF CULTIVARS

Registration of ‘Safari’ Tall Fescue

Safari tall fescue (Festuca arundinacea Schreb.) (Reg. no. CV-57, PI 547099) was developed by Pure-Seed Testing, Inc., of Hubbard, OR, and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. Safari was released by Turf Seed, Inc., of Hubbard, OR, in September 1991. It was evaluated under the experimental designations 5MW and PST-5MWR. Safari is marketed by Turf Seed and the first certified seed was produced in 1991.

Safari is an advanced-generation synthetic cultivar selected from the half-sib progenies of five clones. These clones trace their origin to plants selected from old turfs in Kansas, Georgia, New Jersey, Idaho, and North Carolina from 1962 to 1980. Selected plants were hybridized with each other or with elite plants from the Rutgers University turfgrass breeding program. Progenies from these crosses were subjected to varying numbers of cycles of phenotypic and genotypic recurrent selection. During the fall of 1984, 273 plants were selected from old spaced-plant nurseries at Adelphia, NJ, based on performance during summer stress, attractive appearance, and color retention at low soil fertility levels. Selected plants were transplanted to an isolated crossing block. Single-plant progenies of all plants showing acceptable seed yield were established in a turf trial at Adelphia. Selection within this turf trial was based on attractive appearance, and relative freedom from the rhizoctonia brown patch (caused by Rhizoctonia solani Kühn) and pythium blight (caused by Pythium spp.). A total of 1470 plants selected from the five best-performing progenies were established in a spaced-plant nursery near Hubbard, OR, during the fall of 1986.

Selection criteria within this nursery included high seed yield, attractive dark-green color, and resistance to stem rust (caused by Puccinia graminis Pers.:Pers.). Single-plant progenies of 43 selected plants were established in turf trials in New Jersey and Oregon. Plants selected from the best-performing plots were subjected to a second cycle of selection for increased uniformity, higher seed head number, and improved resistance to powdery mildew (caused by Erysiphe graminis DC. ex Merat) and stem rust in a spaced-plant nursery in Oregon. A total of 319 clones were selected to produce breeder seed of Safari.

Safari tall fescue is a persistent turf-type cultivar with medium dark-green color, medium-fine leaf texture, medium-high density, medium-low growth habit, good early spring greenup, and good late fall color retention. It has improved resistance to rhizoctonia brown patch, stem rust, and crown rust (caused by Puccinia coronata Corda). Safari performed well in the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program ranking third for overall turfgrass quality of 65 tall fescues evaluated at 42 locations for 4 yr.

Registration of ‘Earlybird’ Proso Millet

‘Earlybird’ (Reg. no. CV-170, PI 578073) proso millet (Panicum miliaceum L.) developed by the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station and released in 1993. Earlybird was selected from the cross ‘Minco’/NE76010//’RiseV1’ for improved agronomic performance and is similar to ‘Sunup’. Cool growing conditions increase the incidence of red pigmentation in the foliage. Earlybird is intermediate between Dawn and Sunup, 6% greater than Rise, and 41% greater than Dawn.

Earlybird has a white seed coat (lemma and palea) and a white proso millet that was selected from the half-sib progenies of five clones. These clones trace their origin to plants selected from old turfs in Kansas, Georgia, New Jersey, Idaho, and North Carolina from 1962 to 1980. Selected plants were hybridized with each other or with elite plants from the Rutgers University turfgrass breeding program. Progenies from these crosses were subjected to varying numbers of cycles of phenotypic and genotypic recurrent selection. During the fall of 1984, 273 plants were selected from old spaced-plant nurseries at Adelphia, NJ, based on performance during summer stress, attractive appearance, and color retention at low soil fertility levels. Selected plants were transplanted to an isolated crossing block. Single-plant progenies of all plants showing acceptable seed yield were established in a turf trial at Adelphia. Selection within this turf trial was based on attractive appearance, and relative freedom from the rhizoctonia brown patch (caused by Rhizoctonia solani Kühn) and pythium blight (caused by Pythium spp.). A total of 1470 plants selected from the five best-performing progenies were established in a spaced-plant nursery near Hubbard, OR, during the fall of 1986.

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