ANSWERS to FAQ about Alfalfa

1. University winter survival data indicates that varieties with similar Fall Dormancies may survive differently in severe winters. A New Winter Survival Index (WSI) is currently being used to help the grower choose the variety with the best winter survival.

2. Fall Dormancy is only an indirect predictor of winter survival.

3. New Alfalfa seedlings do not survive well in old alfalfa stands, due to a toxin produced by the old alfalfa plants.

4. Newer varieties may persist longer due to increased pest resistance that results in improved plant health.

5. No commercial alfalfa variety currently on the market is classified as non-bloating. Grazing alfalfa types persist longer under grazing pressure. Problems with bloating can be controlled with bloat blocks, drinking water additives or livestock management.

6. Deep crowns are only one trait that results from selection under intensive grazing. Many traits are needed to insure a variety is grazing tolerant

7. Deep crowns are only one trait that may result from selection under wheel traffic. Many traits are needed to develop a traffic tolerant variety.

8. Animal Feeding trials have never shown any adverse affects on animal intake or performance, due to increased pest resistance.

9. Multifoliate expression only refers to the increase in number (greater than 3) of leaflets in a cluster on the alfalfa plant. This increase in number often results in smaller leaflets and no increase in total leaf mass. Therefore, varietal testing for hay quality is the only true measure of an alfalfa varieties ability to deliver increased hay quality.

10. Cheap Seed" is often "Low profit Seed" due to lower long term yields and less persistence in the field.

11. Increased yield and stand longevity more than pays for the initial seed costs.

12. Farmer’s often plant oats or grain with their new alfalfa planting, hoping to capture increased revenue from this type of hay. However heavy planting of a grain with alfalfa, may result in a poor stand of alfalfa. This also reduces the long term yield potential of that field. Short term gain; Long term revenue Loss.

13. There are approximately 220,000 alfalfa seed in one pound of seed.