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Repository Citation

Buckner, Robert C. and Burrus, Paul B. Jr., "New Bluegrass Variety Kenblue" (1967). *Agronomy Notes*. 211.
https://uknowledge.uky.edu/pss_notes/211

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No. 47

RECEIVED
MAY 17 1967

NEW BLUEGRASS VARIETY KENBLUE

By Robert C. Buckner and Paul B. Burrus II

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The production of certified seed of Kenblue, a new Kentucky-grown bluegrass, may start this fall. It will be the first time a Kentucky-grown bluegrass of what the scientists call "known origin" is available to farmers and home owners.

It will be much more desirable for Kentucky use than the other standard varieties such as Merion, Delta, or Newport. All of these are considered "good" varieties, but not under Kentucky conditions. These are more susceptible to diseases than the new variety, Kenblue.

Kenblue development is explained this way.

We picked a number of fields in Central Kentucky that had been in Kentucky bluegrass more than 10 years. This spring we will pick from 20 to 24 fields that will act as the source of seed for the new Kenblue variety. We will attempt to pick these 20 to 24 fields from all the Central Kentucky counties so that there will be a wide distribution. Seed, after harvesting, will be blended at a central point. We will use an equal amount from each of these selected fields. The blend will be made so that no one field will contribute more than 10 percent to the total blend. Then the blend will serve as our source of seed for the Kenblue variety. This will be what we call 'foundation seed,' the first step in the certification process.

All certified seed in the future of Kenblue will trace directly to this original blend of seed. This insures a source of seed of known origin and will guarantee the public that when they want to buy certified seed of Kenblue, they'll know they are getting Kentucky-grown seed.

In tests on the UK farm at Lexington, Kentucky-grown bluegrass seed has been superior to all named varieties in disease-resistance and to the sod webworm.

It is the hope that Kentucky will recapture the bluegrass seed market which has been lost to the northwestern states in the last 10 years.

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