

Tom Wolf, Coosa Valley Turf Farms and TifGrand™ - Real Stars in Alabama

“With the economy the way it is,” says Tom Wolf, owner of Coosa Valley Turf Farms, LLC, “you have to watch the bottom line a lot closer and everything has to pay for itself.”

That’s one reason Coosa Valley Turf was one of the first licensees of TifGrand™ Certified Bermudagrass when it was released in 2009 – Tom knew TifGrand™ would re-define the world of Bermudagrass.

TifGrand™(PP21017) is the world’s first sterile triploid Bermudagrass that will maintain a dense, monoculture stand in conditions from full sun to significant shade. TifGrand™ is a dense, semi-dwarf Bermudagrass with thin, dark green blades. Developed by Drs. Wayne Hanna and Kris Braman of the University of Georgia’s internationally renowned turfgrass breeding program, testing and evaluation for over a decade have proven its outstanding tolerance of 60% to 70% shade as well as its superior performance in full sun. It spreads by both stolons and rhizomes without being overly aggressive and requires lower fertilizer (nitrogen) and water inputs than previously released Bermudagrasses - good news for growers as well as homeowners, golf course superintendents, sports field managers and the environment

TifGrand™ is grown only as a certified turfgrass, meeting stringent state seed certifying agency requirements and under the close supervision of The Turfgrass Group, Inc., the company selected by the University of Georgia to license and market this revolutionary new Bermudagrass.

Bill Carraway, Vice President of Marketing for The Turfgrass Group, Inc., first met Tom several years ago. He says "Tom Wolf was one of the first producers that came to mind. Coosa Valley is a key producer of every variety we license and I had no doubt that TifGrand™ could become as important a part of Tom's production and marketing mix as he is to our production network. Tom is a great person and a great grower. He's done a lot for the turfgrass industry in Alabama and as President of the Alabama



Tom Wolf, owner Coosa Valley Turf Farms, LLC, and the first pallet of TifGrand™ harvested.
Photo courtesy The Turfgrass Group, Inc. © 2010

Turfgrass Association for 2011 he will do even more."

Coosa Valley Turf's first sale and harvest of TifGrand™ was in July, 2010 and, as Tom had originally predicted, was to a homeowner whose trees had grown to shade the yard. Bermuda is the most widely planted turfgrass in the South and for those who love their

trees as much as their lawns, Tom said "homeowners will love being able to have the same Bermudagrass in their shady backyards as is in the sunny fronts. The appearance is better and the maintenance is easier."

Like any prudent farmer, Tom moved deliberately and his first planting of TifGrand™ was only six acres of the 300 acres that Coosa Valley Turf has in sod production. This year he will put 30 more acres into production: "We've seen the

economy turning a little better this year and we want to be ready,” said Tom, explaining the 500% increase in acreage.

He also understands that the turfgrass market is changing. The downturn in the housing market, a primary driver of turfgrass sales, has caused over-supply and decreased profit margins for varieties like Tifway(419) and commodity turfgrasses: Hundreds of unprofitable acres are being taken out of production across the Southeast every month. TifGrand™ gives Coosa Valley Turf a profitable price-point with a differentiated, value-added, turfgrass that is protected by certification and sales volume that is protected by the limited number of licenses that will be granted in each state.

Tom Wolf, Coosa Valley Turf Farms and TifGrand™ - the real stars of the turfgrass industry in Alabama and the Southeast.

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Written by Terri Ceravolo, owner of Sweet Apple Graphics, a design/marketing firm serving the horticulture industries.
terri@graphicsgreen.com
(770) 329-7722 (cell)