TurfComms

Vol. 10, I5 **Sept. 15, '97**

PURPOSE: To pass on what we learn willingly and happily to others in the profession so as to improve turf conditions around the country.

NEMATODES: Clandosan™, a chitin material, was reputed a few years back to be a biological control for nematodes. It failed miserably according to a poster paper presented at the ASHS Annual Mt., abstract 045.

DORMANT OIL: Need a biodegradable dormant or summer oil? Try soybean oil at 4% - dormant, or 2% for summer applications. Avoid use on spruce. Appears to work well on mites, scale and azalea lacebug according to a paper presented at the ASHS Annual Meeting in Salt Lake this summer. abstract 389.

MULCHES: If you have been chipping up your tree limbs and using the chips for mulch you may be worried about toxicity to plants from chips produced from Eucalyptus, Pine, and Black Walnut. According to a paper presented at the ASHS Annual Meeting in Salt Lake this summer you can relax. No toxicity was found from using three inches of either fresh or composted chips from these trees to a three very young potted trees. Now a nitrogen deficiency you might see from using fresh chips.

ROUNDUP: If you are one of those that used the old formulation at about a one lb./A as a selective (hopefully directed) spray for removing weeds from hardened conifers and vinca don't try the same with Roundup Pro. The surfactant this new formulation contains makes it a hotter product. Also note that you should not use even the old Roundup on conifers that have recently

---

TURFCOMMS is published at unpredictable intervals by the editor and publisher:

Douglas T. Hawes, Ph.D.
Certified Professional Agronomist
Specializing in Golf Course
Maintenance Consulting

2408 Roundrock Trail
Plano, Texas 75075
(972) 867-0176
Fax **(972)** 519-9263

Subscription cost is $15. Send checks to Doug Hawes at the above address.

been heavily pruned. according to a paper presented at the ASHS Annual Meeting in Salt Lake this summer, abstract 391. It is suggested you wait till fall when buds are well developed and new needles have a waxy coating before trying this. One of the symptoms of Roundup injury is a lack of apical dormancy, which can be a real problem to Christmas tree growers. By the way for you Easterners, white pine is very sensitive to Roundup.

GOOSEGRASS CONTROL: Have you been having trouble controlling goosegrass (silver crabgrass or crowsfoot) *Eleusine indica* when using one of the dinitroaniline group of preemerges? The dinitroaniline group is Barricade, Balan, Pendimethalin, Surflan, and Treflan (part of Team). There has been found three goosegrass biotypes that are resistant to this chemical group of preemerge herbicides. They have been found at locations where this group of preemerges have been used yearly for a long time. The solution is to switch to preemerges not in this group such as Bensulide, Dimension or Ronstar.

Scientist are thinking of taking this gene out of the resistant goosegrass plant and adding it to a desirable turf species. That would then allow you to seed the desirable turf species and use this group of preemerges at establishment to control the germination of normal weedy grasses.

'CHAMPION': A new dwarf bermudagrass is sweeping Texas I think I've almost seen in the last year as many greens with Champion on them as Tifdwarf. A lot of golf courses that were in bentgrass have got tired of the fight to keep them alive all summer especially as the volume of play increases.

From what I have seen and learned Champion does make a better putting surface than Tifdwarf. However, when overseeded it has all the problems of Tifdwarf. If overseeded too heavily in the Fall or the overseeding isn't properly handled in the Spring the greens will have a very bad Spring transition. I heard and or saw at least one of each of these problems this Spring.

COMPLIMENTS: It was great to have another newsletter editor comment in a positive way in her newsletter on the information I pass along in mine. Thank you Lori Russell, Executive Director of Peaks & Prairie GCSA and editor of **The Perfect Lie**.

GLOBAL DECLINE: Maybe this is part of getting old but I have become more concerned about the environment. My wife and I go around and round about this at times but I feel human population control and even reduction is necessary if we are going to save this world for our grandchildren and great grandchildren to enjoy. She says look at all the land out in the West sitting vacant. And I say its vacant because there is no water. But,.....

World Watch Magazine Vol. 10, No.5, Sept./Oct. '97 on pg. 39 has the following things to contemplate in that regard. "Amount of water returned to the Ogallala Aquifer by rainfall each year ..... 2.4 billion gallons. Amount drawn from the Ogallala for irrigation and other human uses each year ..... 20.0 billion gallons." The Ogallala Aquifer is runs under much of Nebraska, Kansas and down into West Texas. It is therefore running dry at the rate of 17.6 billion gallons per year.

Also we can't feed an ever expanding population for several reason. One is lack of arable land.

Another is lack of topsoil on the land that was arable. "Amount of topsoil created by nature each year ..... 0.4 billion tons. Amount lost to erosion ..... 25.0 billion tons." She says, I'm a pessimist. I say, I'm a realist..... Hopefully there will be food enough around so we can keep discussions like this going another 30 years, but???

AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S Plant Heat-Zone Map: What does this mean to us. As turf growers not much although you might want to look at it before you take a job in another part of the country. It is designed to aid in deciding what plants will be able to with stand the amount of heat in a particular part of the US of A. It is based on the Average Number of Days per Year Above 86°F (30°C). At the present where you can often obtain information on trees and shrubs as to there winter (cold) hardiness zone the heat-zone information is not yet there. If you wish a copy of this map run out and buy the Sept./Oct. 1997 The American Gardener, or order a AHS Heat Map by sending $14.95 to AHS Heat Map, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308-1300. or call (800) 777-7931 ext. 45.

You can read some information into this Map if you're careful. *Poa annua* for instance our 'turf treasure' grows as a perennial along the California, Oregon and Washington coast (Zone 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) or New England, N.Y., Penn. and down the Appalachian Mt. Range (same zones). Then there is the Transition Zone (zone 6 and 7) on the Plant Heat-Zone Map. Although this concept breaks down as you go west, and there are areas where you would want to include the Heat-zone 8 in the Transition Zone.

What areas of the U.S. has the greatest number of days above 86°F? South Texas and Florida with the Greater Yuma, AZ area close but slightly behind.

DR. DIRR: This same issue of The American Gardener has an excellent write-up of Dr. Michael Dirr, author of Manual of Woody Landscape Plants and other books, and now CDs on trees. I found out that Dirr even got a Ph.D. from one of my old alma mater. His teaching style sounds much like the old professor I took my plant materials course from at Univ. of Mass; but would doubt he studied under him. I hated that course so bad I tore up all my notes while going through them during my last review for the final. Only course I ever did that in. Boy, did I regret that later. They were a great set of notes on trees.

AERIFICATION: Every once in a while I get asked if you can aerify too much. My answer is yes and no. Yes, if it gets you fired. No, if done when the grass is actively growing. Saw this summer some athletic fields that have come a long way over the last four or five years. Two things that I feel have made these into first class athletic fields. The first is an increased frequency of mowing; and the second is monthly aerification.

BERMUDAGRASS GREENS MANAGEMENT: I probably shouldn't admit I am no way as sure how to manage bermudagrass greens compared to my understanding of managing bentgrass greens. I write this in May after having been in the last week in three different states looking in each case bermudagrass greens. One of the three superintendents has been fairly successful in producing halfway decent putting surfaces and keeping his grass healthy. The greens are not large, some less than 4,000 sq. ft. but all in full sun. Another of the three pulls off a miracle each

year just getting anything to live. Several of his greens are under 3,000 sq. ft. and the number of rounds approach 50,000, and if that isn't enough many of the smallest greens don't get afternoon sun. The later is great for the overseeding but, bermudagrass only covers over these areas the month or two before he overseeds again. The third course's greens aren't as healthy as the first guy's yet his greens are in full sun and his Stimpmeter speeds don't get any faster than six feet. His rounds are less than 30,000; similar to the first golf course.

The first guy never uses preemerge on his greens. Is that why the bermudagrass is so healthy? I mean his roots are so strong plugs taken to two inches with a soil probe tend to stay in the green. Deeper plugs twisted before pulling will come out most of the time. WHY?

Recently I received a fax from Gary Grigg part of which probably fits in here. Gary asked among other things why Dr. Ward made the comment that bermudagrass does not do well on sand. Well I told Gary why I thought Dr. Ward might have made the statement and that I agreed with him to some extent. These are 1) that bermudagrass appears to need a fertile soil; and sands are usually not fertile. 2) Nematodes love sandy soils and bermudagrass roots. 3) Bermudagrass in the north of its growing region is much more sensitive to winter kill in sandy soils. I assume this is because sandy soils cool off faster and thus freeze deeper and colder than heavier soils. It could also be due to the lack of winter moisture in sandy soils. Therefore, in general bermudagrass in much of the area I travel in does not appear to do as well in sandy soils as in heavier soils.

Having written that to Gary I decided to check soil nutrient test results from greens of the above three golf courses and although I could not get a definite percent sand from the results I could get a comparison of organic matter level and cation exchange capacity (CEC). My bet before doing this was that the greens with the healthiest bermudagrass have the highest CECs (thus the least sand). **I was wrong!** The course of the above three with the healthiest bermudagrass was halfway between the other two in organic matter and just a 1/2 percent above the lowest of the three in CECs. Maybe it was just the lack of preemerge damage.

NURSERY: I have encouraged superintendents, students, club officials for decades now to put in a putting green nursery of at least 5,000 sq. ft. Often I haven't been very successful. I'm a lousy salesman. But, I now have a new tool, according to Dr. Beard in V.5, #3 of Turfax™ the Old Course at St. Andrews has a 28 acre nursery. No, not for greens repair. Surely though anybody that was informed of that would realize that if the Old Course at St. Andrews needs 28 acres they ought to at least have 5000 sq. ft. I think the availability of good sod farms in many large city areas certainly does away with the need for a nursery for areas other than the greens. To my way of thinking a greens nursery is almost always needed.

ANIMAL REPELLENTS: There is a new kid on the block according to The Avant Gardener, V.29, #11, Sept. '97, pg. 88. Bitrex the bitterest substance known is now available in a latex formulation which can be sprayed on plants. Write to Nortech Forest Technologies, 7600 West 27 Street, St. Louis Park, MN 55426 for more information.

TREE TUBES (SHELTERS): If you been thinking of using these to protect young trees forget it according to papers and a discussion held at the ASHS meeting they do more harm than good.

- END -