

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION EASTERN REGION

NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

MID-ATLANTIC DISTRICT
PLANT INDUSTRY STATION
BELTSVILLE, MARYLAND



EASTERN TURFLETTER

ALEXANDER M. RADKO
EASTERN DIRECTOR

CHARLES K. HALLOWELL
MID-ATLANTIC DIRECTOR

T. T. TAYLOR
NORTHEASTERN AGRONOMIST

No. 5

December, 1957

For Excellent Programs, Tune "WTCS"

Progressive turfmen look forward to WTCS programs. The WTCS frequency is unique in that it is devoted entirely to sound turfgrass management principles, and no aggravating commercials. Further, the "life" of programs on WTCS does not depend on Trendex or Neilsen ratings ... but on individual attendance and personal support. Though attendance is now good, there is much room for improvement. Persons responsible for the difference between good and excellent support are those who assume an "anti" or "reverse" WTCS attitude, i. e. SamifiCareToobotherWithit. Don't be one of the SCTW's. Support WTCS and bring an associate to share in the fun and learning.

Winter Turfgrass Conference Schedule

NORTHEASTERN WEED CONTROL CONFERENCE, Hotel New Yorker, New York City, N. Y.
January 8, 9, and 10, 1958

NEW JERSEY COURSE IN TURF MANAGEMENT, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N. J.
January 20 - 23, 1958

U.S.G.A. GREEN SECTION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, Drake Hotel, Chicago, Illinois
January 24, 1958

NATIONAL TURFGRASS CONFERENCE AND SHOW, sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D. C.
February 2 - 7, 1958

Since the MidAtlantic Golf Course Superintendents Association is host to the National Meeting, there will be no Mid-Atlantic Conference at Baltimore this year.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE, Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, Pa.
February 17 - 20, 1958

CORNELL CONFERENCE, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York
February 24 - 28, 1958

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS CONFERENCE, Amherst, Mass.
March 6, 7, 1958

"Berkshires Grass"

During the last few months, large ads have appeared in newspapers throughout the Northeast promoting "Berkshires Grass". The sudden and unheralded appearance of these ads prompted inquiry from many sources, therefore we feel that we should publish here portions of Dr. DeFrance's Rhode Island release dated September 30, 1957 in order to place "Berkshires Grass" in proper perspective. We wish to point out that to the best of our knowledge no Experiment Station engaged in turfgrass work has adequately tested "Berkshires Grass", and secondly, the underlined words of the text of Dr. DeFrance's release which follows have been inserted by your editors.

"'Berkshires Grass' appears to be a form of creeping bentgrass of fairly fine texture. It was quick to spread and grow laterally in our lawn plot planted with stolons. It is propagated vegetatively by stolons rather than by seed.

A putting-green plot will be planted with 'Berkshires Grass' stolons during the first week in October here at the Rhode Island Agricultural Experiment Station in order to evaluate it against other types of putting-green grass. How it will compare with other bentgrasses that have been under test for several years and have been satisfactory for putting-green turf remains to be seen.

It should be pointed out that we do not recommend any type of creeping bentgrass that we have observed, over an extended period, for lawn-grass purposes unless the owner is prepared to make a special hobby of his lawn and give it considerable extra care and attention.

We do not feel that we have had 'Berkshires Grass' under our observation for a sufficient time to evaluate it with respect to weed, disease, and other pest resistance. On only three months' observation we are not ready to recommend it nor do we wish to condemn it.

We have publications dealing with grasses and mixtures that have been proven satisfactory. In the case of 'Berkshires Grass' we cannot, at this time, give an opinion that we would consider adequate, except to state that we are testing 'Berkshires Grass' and when we have more data we will be pleased to release it."

S O I L T E S T I N G

Soil tests are valuable in that they determine the levels of various nutrient elements in soils. Soil tests also give some indication of past lime and fertilizer practices, as well as requirements for the crop to be grown. The important elements in turfgrass culture are nitrogen, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and potassium. Tests for each of these nutrient elements, except nitrogen, are normally made by most soil testing laboratories. Nitrogen determinations are not normally made unless specifically requested, because they are not generally dependable due to many interrelated and complex factors. Some of these are quantity and quality of organic matter, moisture and temperature fluctuations, microbial population, aeration, etc. The experienced turf man therefore determines the need for nitrogen by careful observation. Likewise, tests for minor or so-called "trace elements" are not normally made unless specifically requested. To date, little is known as to the relationship between the amounts of minor elements found in soils and turfgrass needs.

Soil testing laboratories provide accurate readings for calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and potassium. Whether readings are an accurate account of the soil nutrient levels of the area depends on whether samples were taken properly.

Sampling technique -- recommended by most Experiment Stations engaged in turf work is to take a representative sampling of each area to be tested, i.e. for each tee, green, fairway, or rough area, take 10 to 20 cores of soil at random to a 2 inch depth. There are some who feel there is logic to deeper sampling at times below the 2 inch level. The cores should be from $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 1" in diameter -- many superintendents select cores after aeration for this purpose. In any event, the amount required for any one sample should be from one-half to one pint of soil. Many Stations supply cartons for soil samples, and some will not accept samples except in cartons provided. It is well, therefore, to check with your Station prior to forwarding samples. Samples should not be collected too soon after fertilizer or lime is applied.

Soil samples should be air dried before they are forwarded to the laboratory as other means of drying soil may have some effect on the availability of nutrient elements.

Frequency of sampling -- Under ordinary management, the fertility and acidity levels do not change rapidly. Therefore it is unnecessary to test soils yearly under normal conditions. Once the pH and various nutrient levels are determined, this information should serve as a guide for fertilizer and lime applications. Many superintendents thereafter submit a few samples every few years to keep abreast of the trend in soil fertility as a result of nutrients applied.

Behavior of some elements -- generally, as stated previously, nitrogen requirements are determined through observation, and the performance of the turf. Phosphorus is relatively immobile in soils. Normally in soils under greens, we find an abundance of phosphorus but a deficiency or a low reading in available potassium. The latter is due primarily to the fact that potassium is removed when clippings are removed from putting green surfaces, also to some leaching. On fairways and tees, we find a wide range of variability due to individual fertilizer practices.

Interpretation of results -- is a very important part of soil testing. It has been said, and rightly so, that soil tests are only as good as their interpretation. Knowing regional soils, the crop to be grown, and how to interpret results of soil tests -- all enter strongly into the picture. It is of utmost importance, therefore, to have results interpreted by someone trained in turfgrass management. We of the Green Section would be happy to assist in this task.

Charge for samples -- Most Experiment Stations charge \$1.00 per sample.

We extend to all - BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!!

Eastern Turfletter

USGA GREEN SECTION

BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 366
NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.

MR. WILLIAM BENCEYFIELD
U. S. GOLF ASSN. GREEN SECT.
13267 VERANO ST.
GARDEN GROVE, CALIF.