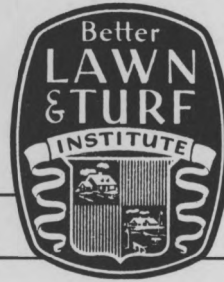


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BETTER LAWN

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BETTER LAWN & TURF INSTITUTE—



Harvests

2233 GRAND AVENUE • KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

July 18, 1957

Dear Sir:

With the increased tempo of Institute activities, we are presenting herewith a resume of activities set forth in this, the third issue of Harvests.

Early in June, a series of photographs on lawn-making and tending was made, the majority of the props being furnished by Robison's Lawn & Golf Course Supplies and Turf Equipment Company, a Toro distributor. We feel now that we have developed a fairly adequate sequence of shots usable in publications devoted to the differing aspects of lawn making and maintenance. In a conference with President Bill Gassner and Roy Edwards, secretary, it was decided to develop a brief summarization of Institute activities for the smaller operators working with Institute members to better acquaint these cooperating strippers with what is being done to benefit the whole industry. Consequently, a two-page information statement with an accompanying reprint was mailed to lists turned in by members. These statements are still available, in case members not sending in a mailing list would like to have a supply for themselves, or mailed directly from the central office.

Summer articles of interest to lawn makers are getting a good play and a similar series for autumn is being mailed to the nation's garden editors, including such titles as "Seeding the Lawn", "Seed the Lawn in Autumn", "Readying Soil for Lawn Seeding", "Should the Lawn be Rolled", "Bolstering the Lawn in Autumn" and "Hurrying the New Lawn". There has also been a news release prepared on the creation of the new Turfgrass Division within the framework of the A.S.T.A., with which we are cooperating. Preparation of items for gardening, home and the general magazine fields continues. Through the summer and late spring you have received several copies or reprints of articles that have appeared. We have acquired a few additional reprints, which will be circulated to the membership. In press are autumn items including "Gibberellin and Greener Grass", for Popular Gardening; "Establishing the High Plains Lawn", for Green Thumb; "Just Around the Corner for Better Lawns", for Horticulture; "It's Election Season in Lawnland, for Better Maintenance; and a lawn question and answer article for Household. In addition there should be at least two other items having appeared by the time this is in your hands; - one entitled "Lawn Weeding", in Green Thumb, and another on autumn seeding, "Lawn Time", in Horticulture.

The Institute has the dual obligation of keeping its advisors informed as well as the membership. Consequently we have recently sent the third letter of the series to the 62 Institute Advisors, at the various experiment stations throughout the country.

Included in this mailing was a questionnaire asking opinion on several matters relating to roadside seeding. From the annual meeting you may remember that a great deal of promise is shown in using turfgrass varieties, such as Kentucky bluegrass, for the immense new acreages to be attractively landscaped on the interstate highway system.

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Incidentally, we have now received reprints of the article appearing in Parks & Recreation, "The 100-Billion Dollar Front Yard for the Nation", of which a photocopy had previously been sent. We attach an additional copy with this issue of Harvests, and will be happy to provide more for distribution, upon request.

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The Advisors were sent a representative selection of reprints on the various items prepared through the year. This should put before them sound general information emphasizing fine turfgrass, and enable them to use some of these same reprints if they wish in developing their own state programs on turfgrass. This could be one of the most effective means of influencing public opinion on turfgrass matters, since these various experts are in contact with garden clubs and similar organizations in their respective states.

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Turning once again to the subject of reprints, we now can supply "Better Lawns are Autumn Sponsored", from Flower & Garden; "Patience Pays in Seeding Lawns", from Green Thumb; and will shortly have 2000 copies of "Lawn Time", from Horticulture.

Should these be desired for mailings, don't hesitate to ask. Incidentally, 5000 copies of the "Better Lawns are Autumn Sponsored" are being distributed through a member mailing to professional landscape gardeners throughout the country.

A profitable day was spent in Chicago, with the Encyclopedia Britannica Research Director, concerning the possibility of a movie on grass, and in going over article possibilities with the editors of Popular Mechanics, it may be possible in the coming months to develop articles regularly for this magazine.

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Recent visits to experiment stations and turfgrass personnel include Wisconsin and Michigan. We have also completed plans for a presentation to the American Institute of Biological Sciences at Stanford University, on the wide adaptability of Kentucky bluegrass. A press release will be prepared in Kansas City, and made available nationally at the time of the meetings.

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All people receiving the complimentary seed samples in 1955 and 1956 have been written, asking for summarization of results. So far the evidence has been quite striking that area in which seed is harvested makes little difference in the final outcome of the lawn. We hope to develop national coverage with this story during the convention season this autumn and winter. It has been possible, especially in working with commercial organizations, to introduce the idea that special strains of

bluegrass should be used only when mixed in small proportions with a matrix of regular Kentucky bluegrass. Only by this means can the proven ability to survive under all conditions be expected. This "shotgun" approach is being accepted in a number of circles, which not long ago were advocating "100% Merion Bluegrass". With a rash of new varieties just around the corner, this might be an advisable theme to emphasize repeatedly.

Work has continued cooperatively with the Neale committee of the American Road Builders Association. A suitable form of publication is being explored, with sponsorship still to be determined. The A.S.T.A. as well as the A.R.B.A. has an interest. Plantings of the demonstrational area by the Ohio Highway Department, for the October Short-Course, have been completed.

The excellent brochure on "Quality Turfgrass" has been readied and mailings are now being made to 2099 key buyers of supermarket chains; 1391 drug chain buyers; 1201 variety store buyers; 340 auto supply chains, and the grass seed buyers for 637 hardware chains.

The question of cost-sharing for bluegrass in the Conservation Reserve program was brought up by a member. We have queried Washington, D. C. on this, and written to all of the states where bluegrass might serve as a suitable cover. An amazing diversity of reasons has been presented as to why bluegrass was admitted or not admitted to the cost-sharing plan, which are being summarized and will be mailed separately to the members. Some of the state

committees have expressed interest in revising their regulations to admit bluegrass for cost-sharing, although the bureaucratic inertia to be overcome is formidable.

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We have been able to undertake a certain amount of demonstration activity at the Kimberdale grounds, with the part-time help of a high school student secured for the summer. These activities are valuable when visitors come (such as an editor of Popular Gardening recently), and especially for providing something definite to talk about future years. We have certain simple demonstrations contrasting rotary vs. reel mowing; well-kept, intermediately-kept and poorly-kept lawn areas; response to differing kinds of fertilizers and combinations; the build-up of mat on bluegrass under differing treatments and types of fertilization; the checking of clover in bluegrass by use of fertilizer; various fungicide and herbicide applications; etc. All of these can be potential story material for another year. Several commercial organizations have sent us equipment for use at the grounds, which contributes to lawning experience at the same time that it saves certain costs in grounds maintenance.

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We have continued to cooperate with the American Seed Trade Association, especially in the creation of the new Turfgrass Division. For the coming year your Director will also serve as vice-chairman of the Turfgrass Division, and as chairman of the Research and Development Committee. Suitable committee appointments are being developed on a national scale, in cooperation

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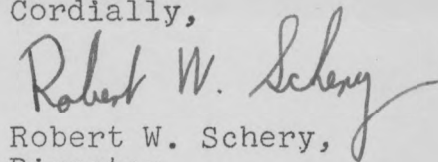
and consultation with the A.S.T.A. headquarters in Chicago.

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This activity will be especially useful in developing survey information. We frequently have requests for statistics on grass seed sales, especially by states and regions and by quality categories. Some of these are for as important a publication as the Sunday supplements, or the Wall Street Journal. At times the A.S.T.A. headquarters in Chicago refers inquiry to us. In the coming weeks we want to attempt some sort of a survey striving for reliable statistics on quantities of seed sold, where and what kind, - something at the moment not reliably reported.

In addition to the several commercial contacts, the Ford Times has interviewed President Gassner on bluegrass harvesting, and one Kentucky producer has been instrumental in having bluegrass featured in the Sunday supplement of the Louisville Courier. Likewise, the Kansas City office arranged for a fine article and several photographs on King City, Mo., at the peak of the bluegrass harvest in the Sunday edition of The Kansas City Star.

Cordially,



Robert W. Schery,
Director

RWS:PB
Encl.