

# UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

## NORTHEASTERN OFFICE

College of Agriculture

Rutgers University

NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

Telephone: CHarter 9-0225



ALEXANDER M. RADKO  
NORTHEASTERN DIRECTOR



## NORTHEASTERN TURFLETTER

Vol. 3, No. 5

November, 1956

### TURFGRASS SURVEY OF NEW JERSEY

Now that the excitement of Election Day is past (and because of it too, for we do not wish to run the risk of being accused of "politic-ing" in any way), we should like to focus attention on one form of "Big Business", which in our humble opinion receives altogether too little publicity. We feel sure no one will need a second guess, it is this business of turf.

Earlier this year, members of the New Jersey Turf Advisory Committee, which cooperates with Rutgers University, published a report on turf which is indeed impressive, and without question earmarks turf in the "Big Business" category. The report is entitled, "In the Garden State, Turf is Big Business". Excerpts from this report follow:

Table 1. -- The turf grass survey of New Jersey

Type of Turf Areas	No.	Acreage	Annual Maintenance Cost	Current Installation Costs
Airports . . . . .	76	23,251	\$ 581,000	\$ 11,625,000
Athletic Fields . . . . .	500	2,500	250,000	2,000,000
Cemeteries . . . . .	1,200	12,000	2,400,000	12,000,000
Churches . . . . .	2,850	331	99,300	662,000
<b>GOLF COURSES . . . . .</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>4,050,000</b>	<b>13,500,000</b>
Home Lawns . . . . .	1,400,000	164,000	46,290,000	140,000,000
Industrial Lawns . . . . .	450	2,150	430,000	2,150,000
Parks: Municipal, County and State . . . . .		8,000	700,000	6,400,000
Public Properties (Other)		1,000	100,000	800,000
Roadsides . . . . .		16,284	977,040	32,568,000
Schools . . . . .	2,042	4,000	400,000	3,200,000
		<u>242,516</u>	<u>\$ 56,277,340</u>	<u>\$224,905,000</u>

"New Jersey's 242,500 acres of turf cost more than \$56 million each year to maintain. This makes turf the third largest agricultural enterprise in the state.

If we had to replace this turf with new grass, the installation cost at present prices would be close to \$225 million.

These figures are estimates arrived at by the Turf Advisory Committee of the Experiment Station after a careful study of all the available data. They represent the first attempt to evaluate the turf-grass areas of New Jersey as a single commodity."

The figures above should serve to point up the importance of the greater need for proportionate distribution of funds for Turf Research, Extension, and Teaching at our Land Grant Colleges and Agricultural Experiment Stations. To date in most states, turf grass work has been assigned a "back seat" in favor of agricultural commodities of lesser financial value. . For too long a time now, turf has been feeding at the "second table".

#### HAVE YOU BEEN ASKED ABOUT MONDO "GRASS"?

During the year we have received many inquiries in connection with a product called Mondo "grass", which has been widely advertised for lawn cover purposes in the Northeast. To bring to you the facts about this plant, the following release by Dr. Felix V. Juska, Research Agronomist, United States Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland, is presented verbatim.

#### Lily-Turf (Ophiopogon Spp.)

#### Mondo 'Grass'

"Mondo is the old generic name for the genus Ophiopogon, commonly referred to as lily-turf or snake's beard. It is a semi-tropical oriental plant originally introduced into the United States by the U.S.D.A. from Tang hsi, China, in 1906. Two species, japonicus and Jaburan are well known in cultivation. The last named species is used chiefly as a greenhouse foliage plant growing from 1-1/2 to 3 feet tall.

#### Characteristics and Uses:

Mondo or Ophiopogon japonicus is not a grass but a low growing evergreen perennial closely related to the lily-of-the-valley. The grass-like leaves are 1/8 of an inch wide, rather rigid, 6-12 inches long and have a tendency to droop. Small violet or bluish-tinged flowers are produced, followed by pale blue berries. The stemless tufted plants spread by means of underground stems and tuberous-thickened roots and are thus readily propagated by division.

Research is somewhat limited, but evidence indicates that the Ophiopogon species are winter-hardy in the Washington, D. C. area, although browning of the leaves may occur beginning with the tip extending an inch or more downward. Further south the plant remains green the year-round. This genus is shade tolerant and needs no mowing when used as a ground cover, where a height of 6-12 inches is not objectionable.

The Ophiopogon species are not recommended for general lawn purposes. They are used as a ground cover under shade trees, terraces, rock gardens, edgings, borders, and other areas where a grass cover cannot be grown satisfactorily. Since the plant is drought tolerant in humid regions, it may be planted on steep banks and terraces for erosion control.

The plant recovers slowly when mowed. Removal of the top portion of the leaf exposes an open unsightly "sod" that may thin out further if mowing is continued. Lily-turf has been largely used for borders and edgings in Italy and southern France and is being used for the same purpose in some of the Southern States."

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE FOR WINTER, 1957

January 21 - 24

Rutgers Turfgrass Conference  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, New Jersey  
Dr. Ralph E. Engel

February 10 - 15

28th National Turfgrass Conference and Show  
Kentucky Hotel  
Louisville, Kentucky  
The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

February 25 - 28

Cornell Turfgrass Conference  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, New York  
Dr. John F. Cornman

# ***Northeastern Turfletter***

USGA GREEN SECTION

**Mr. O. J. Noer  
Milwaukee Sewerage Commission  
Box 2079  
Milwaukee 1, Wis.**

BULK RATE  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT No. 366  
New Brunswick, N. J.