

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION  
GREEN SECTION

NORTHEASTERN OFFICE

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**NORTHEASTERN TURFLETTER**

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"The Thirst for learning is never filled, nor fully satisfied."--Cicero

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS TURFGRASS CONFERENCE REINSTATED

Normally we allocate but a small portion of your Northeastern Turfletter to the announcement of conference dates; however, we feel announcement of this date is "front page" news. It has to do with a conference that just wouldn't be cancelled, because the New England Superintendent's Association and others interested in fine turf just wouldn't allow it to be by-passed, even for one year.

To fill you in on the highlights, Dr. Eliot Roberts announced that due to shortages in instructional staff, the University of Massachusetts Winter School and Annual Fine Turf Conference were to be cancelled for one year. Letters of concern soon poured into the offices of Dr. Roberts and Professor Dickinson, which indeed brought to the attention of officials of the University of Massachusetts just how everyone in the fine turf field felt about the Winter School and Annual Conference. As a result, the Annual Fine Turf Conference was hurriedly reinstated. It is being held at the Waltham Field Station, Waltham, Massachusetts on March 4, 5, 1957.

Prospects for reinstatement of the Winter School in '58 now also look bright.

Another important turfgrass conference coming up soon is the Cornell Conference.

Dates: February 25 - 28, 1957

Place: Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

FROM THE RUTGERS CONFERENCE

The value of any Turf Conference or Short Course may be measured by the quality of technical and practical information put forth, the manner in which it is presented, and the ability of the individual to absorb and digest that information. The 1957 Turfgrass Short Course held at Rutgers

University, January 21 - 24, measured by these standards, was indeed a resounding success. It is to the credit of the speakers that much of the technical information was presented in terms of practical application.

The topics covered a wide range, from chemical fertilizers, fungicides, and herbicides to the function of micro-organisms in the soil, and from turfgrass problems on a national level to those in the Northeast and Southwest. We shall not attempt to summarize all of the material presented as space will not allow it; however, we jotted down a few notes which we feel will be of interest to our readers.

#### Urea-Formaldehyde Fertilizer

Urea-form is a plastic type material produced by the chemical combination of urea and formaldehyde. Its value depends upon how and when the chemical reaction of the urea and formaldehyde is stopped in the manufacturing process. Only materials which fall within the range of a certain ratio of urea to formaldehyde are adapted for use as nitrogen fertilizers, and even in the materials which fall within these limits there may be appreciable differences in performance due to the resistance to decomposition of the nitrogen in the formulation. Some of it may be in the form of free urea and some in forms that are readily decomposed.

Urea-form fertilizers are a relatively new material, and are not as well understood as the more familiar forms of nitrogen carriers. Urea-form, like any other product, has characteristics and peculiarities that must be understood before it can be used intelligently.

#### Hints on Lime and Fertilizer

When buying lime, the price per pound of calcium oxide equivalent is the most important item if it is to be used for neutralizing purposes; however, if magnesium is deficient, it would be advantageous to pay a premium for a material with higher magnesium oxide content. To calculate the calcium oxide equivalent, add the percent calcium oxide to the percent magnesium oxide listed on the bag.

Ground limestone may be the most economical buy. But where it is important that the pH be raised as rapidly as possible, there may be some justification for purchasing the more expensive, quicker acting, hydrated lime.

The prime consideration in purchasing fertilizer is the price per pound of nutrient. The price of nutrients will vary, but a guide that can be used is 16 cents per pound for nitrogen, 10 cents per pound for phosphorus, and 7 cents per pound for potassium.

Under normal conditions, applications of chemical fertilizers cannot be depended upon to be effective for more than two to seven weeks, approximately. In contrast, when the same quantity of total nitrogen is applied in the form of organic fertilizers, the effective period of growth stimulation may be from twelve to twenty-four weeks; however a much greater growth is produced by the chemical fertilizers during their effective period, under normal conditions.

### Living Organisms in the Soil

Soils under turf produce and accumulate larger amounts of organic matter than can be found under any other type vegetation. The amount of root growth obtained has a direct bearing on the soil environment provided for grass plants.

Factors from which difficulties may arise:

- (a) pH
- (b) drainage
- (c) oxygen supply
- (d) nutrient supply
- (e) moisture content
- (f) temperature
- (g) toxic substances

Each of these factors have individual or inter-related effects on soil organisms ... and the intricacies of these interactions are indeed difficult to puzzle out ... but of this we can be sure, when soil organisms are not satisfied with their working conditions, we hamper the effectiveness of our cheapest labor force.

### Page the Mower Manufacturers

Dr. Marvin Ferguson gave a very interesting kodalide talk on golf course problems in the Southwest. Many of the slides shown were reminiscent of the 1955 season experienced in the Northeast ... the drought of past years has made it impossible to keep grasses in good color in the Southwest ... the only green turf was that under irrigation ... those of us who have worked in a limited way with Bermudagrass in the Northeast know that it does indeed have to be dry to throw Bermudagrass off color ... In Texas, Jack Rabbits come for miles to feed on the bentgrass putting greens ... one club in the Lone Star State reported killing more than 6000 Jack Rabbits within a two month period.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

We take pleasure in announcing appointment of Mr. Tate T. Taylor to the Northeastern Green Section staff. Tate, as he is known to his turf friends, has been active in turf in the Metropolitan New York area for many years ... he is also a member of the Turf Advisory Committee that cooperates with Rutgers University. Tate is looking forward to visits to Northeastern Clubs this season.

Tate lost no time in pitching-in ... the major portion of this Turfletter is a result of his efforts.

# ***Northeastern Turfletter***

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