

IN THIS ISSUE

- Michigan Farm Bureau gets **HOT** over a 7th grade text book.
- Turfgrass video deserves a Tip of the Hat.
- Cub Cadet to donate up to \$25,000 to help military families.
- A scoring drive for natural turfgrass!
- Rolawn Turf and the Three Bears
- TPI Ireland Study Tour presentation at TPI's Midwinter Conference.
- A Bit of a Bump? International Green Construction Code and EPA's Watersense.
- Where in the world is TPI represented? Oakwood Sod farm in Delmar, Maryland.
- Texas turfgrass growers address drought.
- Imagine a GREEN ROOF nearly 2-1/4 miles long.
- Do you have a story that might interest our readers? Let us know!



Turfgrass Producers International
2 East Main Street
East Dundee, IL 60118
Tel: 847/649-5555
Tel: 800/405-8873
Fax: 847/649-5678
Email: info@TurfGrassSod.org
Website: www.TurfGrassSod.org
Comments & Submissions: jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org

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Michigan Farm Bureau gets **HOT** over 7th Grade text book.

"Farmers throughout this nation's history have been on the cutting edge of science and innovation. They are problem solvers, and they've already cut their overall carbon footprint, changed practices that in the past led to soil erosion ... farmers are part of the solution, and they deserve better than what this book provided." - Deb Schmucker, manager of the Michigan Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Dept.



When the Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) first objected to a science book for some Michigan seventh-graders entitled, "A Hot Planet Needs Cool Kids," people took notice. When the MFB was successful in persuading the Battle Creek Area Math and Science Center (BCAMSC) to pull the book from 38 Michigan school districts more than a few people were wondering why the MFB would take such action?

The answer lies in portions of the book that the MFB believed to be biased, opinionated, grossly inaccurate, and filled with non-scientific information about modern agricultural practices.

In early October, Julie Mack, writing for the [Kalamazoo Gazette](http://www.kalamazoo-gazette.com) reported that the Michigan Farm Bureau complained that the book presented an inaccurate take on modern agriculture and failed to include information about ways that agricultural practices can help combat climate change.

Mack reported that the book urges children to persuade their parents to "Vote Green" and buy organic; cautions against new-home construction, the plastics industry and conventional agriculture, and notes "many people believe that it is best for the earth for families to have no more than one child." "We've said from the beginning that the science curriculum which included the book was sound," said Deb Schmucker, manager of the MFB Promotion and Education Dept. "We never attempted to challenge or debate

the theoretical soundness or lack of soundness of human-caused global warming. But we have consistently criticized political statements in the book that were disguised as science."

"The book's take on farming is flat-out wrong. There are sweeping statements — for instance, that bad laws favor large farms over small operations, that farm chemicals cause cancer and kill wildlife, or that "industrial farms" are out of balance with nature, unlike small farms of the past — all with no supporting evidence or context offered. Troubling, too, are the references that the book lists, and the resources it endorses", Schmucker said.

So how was the book brought to the attention of the MFB? Mack reported that a Michigan science teacher who is also a farmer read through the book this summer, and alerted the MFB to the book's take on farming and inaccuracies regarding American agriculture.

This story does makes one wonder, did anyone read the book in its entirety before the school district decided to have it as part of their curriculum?

"To be fair to the author, Julie Hall: This book was not written as a textbook, but as something that like-minded people could buy for their children." — Julie Mack (Kalamazoo Gazette)



BASF Turfgrass video deserves a Tip of the Hat

Live On Turfgrass -- Learn the facts about turf's benefits.

From: [BASFTurfTalk](#)



A new *You Tube* video produced by BASF does an excellent job of presenting the benefits of natural turfgrass in a visually appealing way that grabs the viewer's attention and delivers a persuasive message.

Turfgrass is one of the most widespread, beneficial and economical landscape plants in the country. It adds value to America's communities and economy. Watch and share the link to this short video about the benefits of lawns, parks, golf courses, recreational sport fields and green spaces. **Click on image to access the video.**

Cub Cadet to donate up to \$25,000 to help military families



WANTS YOU
TO HELP OUT
OUR TROOPS



[CLICK HERE](#)

Cub Cadet, a global leader in premium quality outdoor power equipment, announced the launch of a new Facebook campaign to support military families nationwide. **GreenCare for Troops (GCFT)**, a national outreach program coordinated by **Project EverGreen**, helps hundreds of volunteers provide free lawn and landscaping services for military families while loved ones are serving overseas.

Cub Cadet will donate \$1 to GCFT for every new fan who clicks "LIKE" on the Cub Cadet Facebook page, with the goal of raising \$25,000.

Since its inception in 2006, Cub Cadet has helped serve more than 10,000 military families as the initiative's sole underwriter.

In 2010, TV celebrity, Mike Rowe of the Discovery Channel's "Dirty Jobs" teamed up with Cub Cadet to bring national attention to the program. The Discovery Channel aired a segment highlighting Cub Cadet and Mike helping Sgt. Peter Mavropoulos with his lawn after he returned from serving two tours in Iraq. Since the segment aired, hundreds of families and volunteers have joined the GCFT ranks.

With this new Facebook initiative, Cub Cadet hopes to engage more online fans and generate additional GCFT registrations.



"We continue our commitment to support GreenCare for Troops, which shows our gratitude to American military families and our communities," said Jeff Salamon, director of marketing, Cub Cadet. "Working with Mike Rowe again to help bring attention to GreenCare for Troops demonstrates both his and our dedication to this effort. While maintaining a green space may not seem like a huge task to you or me, it is one less thing for these families who have a loved one deployed overseas to worry about. It's a little peace of mind."

"Cub has gone beyond the call of duty by bringing GCFT's mission to the attention of those who need our services the most and those who can join us in making an impact at a local level," said Cindy Code, executive director, Project Evergreen. "We're grateful that Cub Cadet continues to help fund and drive awareness around GreenCare for Troops and is encouraging the social media community to rally behind our efforts."

To donate \$1 to GCFT, click "LIKE" on Cub Cadet's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cubcadet.

Visit Project Evergreen's web site to register as a GCFT volunteer at www.projectevergreen.com/gcft.

Turfgrass Producers International is a supporter of Project Evergreen and TPI's executive director, Kirk Hunter serves as Treasurer on the Project Evergreen board.

A scoring drive for natural turfgrass!

"IT'S LOCAL, FRESH, AND RELIABLE. AND IT'S THE GRASS OF CHAMPIONS, WHETHER YOU CHEW IT FOR LUCK OR NOT!"

- LES MILES, HEAD COACH OF THE LSU TIGERS FOOTBALL

For turfgrass producers in the state of Louisiana getting a high profile college coach to promote natural turfgrass was like scoring a winning play in the final seconds of a football game. That's just the way many turfgrass producers felt when Louisiana Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, D.V.M., announced that LSU Coach Les Miles would appear in a state-wide ad campaign promoting "Louisiana Grown" turfgrass. It was great news for turfgrass producers and the green industry as a whole.

The idea to approach Miles was triggered when Miles was captured on camera chewing on a blade of Celebration Bermuda grass during a football game last year between LSU and Alabama. Miles later confessed that he eats grass now and then and thinks Tiger stadium's grass is the best.

In the coming weeks the image of Miles will be used in a series of outdoor, print and web ads that will promote Louisiana Grown turfgrass and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF). Posters of the ad will also be distributed to nurseries and retail outlets throughout the state.

Ron Strahan, an assistant professor and turfgrass specialist at the LSU AgCenter who represents turfgrass farmers throughout the state was quoted as saying, "We're proud to have Coach Miles and Commissioner Strain working with our industry to inform consumers about Louisiana's exceptional turfgrass."

"We couldn't have dreamed of a better spokesperson for Louisiana turfgrass than Les Miles," Commissioner Strain said. "Les is not only a national championship-winning head coach and a respected figure in the state, but he also happens to have a genuine appreciation for turfgrass."

The Louisiana Grown turfgrass campaign is funded through the Louisiana Specialty Crops Program, which is administered by the LDAF.

The United States Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA-AMS), as directed by a 2008 Farm Bill, has issued funds to states to increase the competitiveness of their specialty crops. The turfgrass project is just one of Louisiana's funded projects. Other commodities that received assistance in recent years included strawberries, citrus, sweet potatoes and pecans.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO CHEW IT TO LOVE IT

LOUISIANA GROWN TURFGRASS
DEMAND IT.

If you want the best turfgrass for your lawn or landscape, demand Louisiana Grown. Locally grown turfgrass gets from farm to yard faster, so it's fresher and establishes more reliably.

Louisiana Grown
REAL FRESH
LouisianaGrown.com

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY | MIKE STRAIN DVM, COMMISSIONER

Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, Christmas trees, turfgrass and sod, and nursery and greenhouse crops. The classification of turfgrass sod as a specialty crop was greatly influenced by many green industry organizations including Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) which was actively involved with key government decision makers and met with Dan Christiansen, Majority Professional Staff Member, Specialty Crops in March of 2009. The following is an excerpt from a letter drafted by Kirk Hunter, Executive Director of TPI to the USDA in an effort to have turfgrass considered as a Specialty Crop:

"TPI submits that the Proposed Rule's regulations should clearly establish that turfgrass sod is agricultural and a specialty crop covered by the USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Turfgrass Producers International appreciates the opportunity to comment on this Proposed Rule." - Kirk Hunter, Executive Director

Louisiana isn't the first state to provide Specialty Crop funding to promote natural turfgrass; the North Carolina Sod Producers Association received funding from their state for advertising and marketing as did the Turfgrass Producers of Texas.

Hunter said that TPI had encouraged its members to apply for funding through their state's department of agriculture. "The time and initiative to apply for such funding can be worthwhile and provide individual state turfgrass organizations with the means to better educate and inform the public about the benefits of natural turfgrass. Although funding is on a state-by-state basis, the collective results benefit all turfgrass producers and the green industry as a whole," said Hunter.



TURFGRASS FOR THE THREE BEARS

Land & Utility Ltd have recently laid Rolawn's Medallion turf in a new compound at Five Sisters Zoo, West Lothian, Scotland in readiness for the arrival of three rescue bears who are currently homeless and languishing in a holding centre in Belgium.



Five Sisters Zoo has launched an urgent appeal to rescue the bears who have endured a life of hardship. The Zoo has agreed to construct a new enclosure for the three bears

and has launched an £80,000 (\$127,000 U.S.) appeal to finance it.

The aim is to have the bears in their new home by Christmas.



Initial excavation of bear pond at Five Sisters Zoo.



Land & Utility Ltd begin laying Rolawn's Medallion turf around the bear pond which will be part of the two acre compound for the new arrivals.



Suzy, Carmen and Peggy will be moved to their new home by the end of December if all goes as planned.

The females, (Suzy, Carmen and Peggy) have worked for their owner in a travelling circus for twenty-five years and have spent much of their lives in horrifically cramped cages - measuring just 10 meters square.

One of the bears, Suzy is so traumatized by the conditions she sometimes still keeps walking in small circles.

The zoo is privately owned and run by Brian and Shirley Curran, who are determined to give the bears a new life and a freedom they have never experienced before in two acres of lush woodland with its own bear pond.

Brian said: "All we want to do is give the bears the life they deserve. We have dedicated our lives to the zoo and re-housing animals that otherwise would probably be destroyed.

As of October 3rd the owners reported that over £25,000 (\$40,000 U.S.) had been raised as donations flood in for the Five Sisters Zoo Circus Bear Appeal fund. They are amazed by the response to their fundraising appeal to rescue the three homeless circus bears.

Five Sisters Zoo reported that Rolawn discounted their turf in an effort to help the zoo with their fundraising efforts.

Our thank to Lorraine Willis, marketing executive for Rolawn Limited for bringing this story to our attention.

TPI Ireland Study Tour Presentation At TPI's Midwinter Conference

Attendees will be able to see amazing highlights from TPI's recently completed 12-day Study Tour of Ireland at the TPI Midwinter Conference in Scottsdale.

Tour participant and former TPI Trustee Gary Wilber of Oakwood Sod Farm in Maryland has agreed to share his photos and experiences during the Thursday morning Education Session on Feb. 2nd.

Gary was among 22 TPI members and friends who visited four turf farms in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland as part of the 25th anniversary of TPI's Study Tours.

Arriving in Dublin from New York, the group traveled to the Moffet forklift factory in Dundalk for a tour of the facility.

Moffet forklift factory



The Dundalk operation (part of Cargotec Corporation—recently named Cargotec Ireland) currently acts as a hub for truck-mounted forklift R&D and the prime multi-assembly unit for all Hiab Moffett truck-mounted forklifts. A complimentary breakfast and warm Irish hospitality made the start of the trip all the more pleasant.



Cold and damp conditions in Ireland don't deter turf harvesting at Martyn's Grass Lawns farm north of Galway, but the unusual cab over the tractor and stacking areas make it better for the crew.

From there it was on to nearby Belfast and Londerry in Northern Ireland. While in the area, they visited Evergreen Lawns, owned by the Jameson's (John Sr. & Jr.).

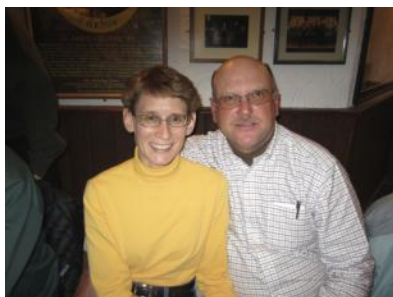
Outside of Galway, they toured the farm of Brian Martyn, Martyn's Grass Lawns and in the Dublin area visited two farms, John Cribbin's Summerhill Lawns and Aidan Burke's Turf Lawn Sales where the manufacturers of a new line of rotary mowers, Major Equipment, Ltd., provided a field demonstration.

Each of the four farm hosts provided a comprehensive view of their farm, equipment demonstrations, and extended their warmth and hospitality that included homemade eats ranging from sweets and sandwiches to sit-down lunches.

In addition to the farms, the group visited numerous sights for which Ireland is so famous including a number of historic gardens including Muckross House outside of Killarney and Powerscourt House and Gardens outside of Dublin, plus a "behind-the-scenes" tour with the head groundsman of the nation's largest stadium, Croke Park with a seating capacity of 82,000 fans.

The 12-day tour circled the entire island. The ever-changing landscape revealed the beauty and history of the two countries every day.

Interested in **TPI's 2012 South Africa and Botswana Study Tour** (Fall 2012) that includes an 11-day South Africa segment with visits to Cape Town, Johannesburg and game runs at Kruger National Park and a 5-day option to Botswana with visits to Victoria Falls and the famed Chobe Game Reserve? [CLICK HERE](#)



Melanie & Gary Wilber, owners of Oakwood Sod Farm, Delmar, MD, enjoyed an evening of Irish music and dance during the 2011 TPI Study Tour.



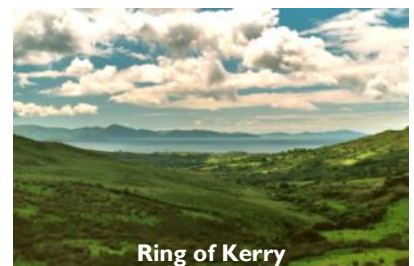
Muckross House



Powerscourt House & Gardens



Croke Park



Ring of Kerry

A few of the many scenic locations that were part of the TPI Study Tour of Ireland.



TPI's Study Tour participants huddle-up at the wind-blown 2,000 year-old Dun Aonghasa, situated some 300 feet above the Atlantic Ocean on the Aran island of Inishmore.

Where in the world is
TPI represented?
EVERYWHERE!

An on-going series featuring photos and copy
from TPI member websites.

OAKWOOD SOD FARM

Delmar, Maryland USA

<http://www.oakwoodsod.com/>



Oakwood Sod Farm, Inc. is owned and operated by **Alan** and **Gary Wilber** who started with 2 acres of tall fescue in a small corner of their farm in 1986. Today, Oakwood grows tall fescue, zoysia, and Patriot bermudagrass.



Local landscape contractors were Oakwood's original customers and are still the heart of their operation, although golf and athletic turf have become a larger part in recent years.

Oakwood Sod Farm has supplied quality turf products to many golf courses on the Delmarva Peninsula as well to many others from New York to Virginia.

Athletic fields are a very important part of their business today. Strict liability laws have forced owners to demand the highest quality turf in order to limit injuries to athletes and avoid potential lawsuits. Oakwood



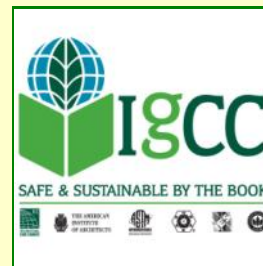
has experience in developing premium athletic surfaces for school systems, major colleges and the National Football League. All of the turf products from Oakwood Sod Farm are grown on high sand content fields to assure compatibility and proper drainage on playing fields. They also offer a complete range of sprigging and renovation services, from new construction in bare ground to renovation or conversion of existing turf.

Whether you need 50 square feet for your lawn or 50 acres for your golf course, or anything in between, Oakwood Sod Farm can help!

Oakwood Sod Farm is a proud member of
Turfgrass Producers International



A Bit of a Bump?



**INTERNATIONAL GREEN
CONSTRUCTION CODE
agrees with the
Watersense "Notice of Intent"**

but there's a catch

Green Industry Pros.com reported on 11/17/11 that the International Green Construction Code will follow the "Notice of Intent" announced by the EPA's Watersense program to remove the 40% turfgrass restriction landscape specifications for new homes. The measure was passed by a 2/3 vote of the International Code Council during a recent meeting in Phoenix, Arizona.

But *Green Industry Pros.com* also reported that Allan Bilka, senior staff architect for the International Code Council, said that while the section on *turfgrass* has been deleted from the International Green Construction Code, it has been replaced by a section on *native plant landscaping*. "This new provision now requires that at least 75% of the newly landscape area be planted with native species," Bilka points out. This may have some similar impact as the 40% turfgrass limitation that was just removed.

Bilka reportedly said, "It will require significant landscaping expertise to determine how much turfgrass can be used in order to meet the requirement for 75% native species. For example, certain types of native turfgrass species could be used in certain regions."

TPI will keep abreast of the situation and provide additional information as it becomes available.

Laughing at Ourselves

Laughing at Ourselves is intended to poke some light-hearted fun at TPI members and the TPI staff. If reader response is favorable we will make this a regular monthly feature. Let us know what you think. — jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org

Photos and captions are pre-approved by all featured individuals.

Listen-up people! One box lunch per person. The white boxes have ham. The brown boxes have turkey. And there are apples and cookies in every box. Remember people, only one box lunch per person.



Warren and Tammy Bell of Biograss Sod Farm in Sandy, Utah are captured by a security camera as they unknowingly take more than their fair share of box lunches during a recent TPI tour. Upon learning of their mistake, Warren commented, "Well Tammy, I guess that explains why we had more apples than Washington State and more cookies than those Keebler elves."

Holiday Greetings

During this special time of the year family and friends come together to celebrate the season and recall fond memories of holidays past and present with loved ones. It is a time to rekindle old acquaintances, reflect on that which is most precious to us, and share our joy with those we hold most dear.

Wherever your travels may find you; be it in the comfort of your own home or in the home of friends or family, the entire staff at Turfgrass Producers International extends our warm wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year to you and yours.



Georgia Sod and Landscape Field Day a Success

Written by: B.J. Johnson

It was a great day for the Georgia Urban Ag Council's *Sod and Landscape Field Day* at the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter on November 3rd in Perry, GA.

Over 100 people attended a morning session that began with Dr. Clint Waltz, University of Georgia Griffin Campus who reported on a recent Georgia sod producers inventory survey. This survey was in response to scattered reports of low current inventory, elevated prices and the likelihood of limited supply in early 2012. The survey showed turfgrass prices are currently higher than the prices in early spring. It was also observed that bermudagrass and zoysiagrass are in low supply.

Other topics included:

- ◆ Mary Kay Woodworth, Executive Director, Georgia Urban Ag Council presented updated information on the Georgia Sod Producers, Metro Atlanta Landscape and Turf Assn the Georgia Turfgrass Assn. merger.
- ◆ New Immigration Laws for sod farmers by Bryan Tolar, President, Georgia Agribusiness Council
- ◆ OSHA Inspections: What can I expect? by Mike Riepenhoff, Risk Control Manager, W. S. Pharr & Co.
- ◆ New Directions for the Department of Agriculture, Gary Black, Commissioner of Agriculture
- ◆ Current economic, business and political climate by Dr. Roger Tutterow, Prof. of Econ., Mercer University

Following lunch at the Super Sod Turf Farm, exhibits were on display for sod growers and landscapers to observe. Several of the exhibitors demonstrated equipment that included - sprig planters, aeration equipment, mowers, harvesters, Big Roll installers and forklifts. It is estimated that nearly 200 people attended the field day event.



Left to right, Ben Copeland, Jim Roquemore, and Ben Copeland Jr. of Super Sod Turf Farm.



Photos: Ian True

2 SECOND SURVEY

November 2011 Survey Results

Have you diversified some of your turfgrass acreage for any of the following?
(please check all that apply)

Soybeans	25%
Corn	21.43%
Other Grains	10.71%
Forage Crops	3.57%
Fruits/Vegetables	3.57%
Other	10.71%
No	25%

As a TPI Member your opinion matters. The **2 Second Survey** on the TPI website is just one way to express your thoughts on a variety of issues. Survey questions change every month.

2 SECOND SURVEY

You Tube

Click on image to see video →



December 2011 Question

Have you seen The Lawn Institute videos on You Tube starring "The Turfgrass Team"?

If YES, would you like to see more videos featuring "The Turfgrass Team"?

Have you seen The Lawn Institute videos on You Tube starring "The Turfgrass Team"?

- ☐ YES
☐ NO

If YES, would you like to see more videos featuring "The Turfgrass Team"?

- ☐ YES
☐ NO

To participate go to: <http://www.turfgrassod.org/default.aspx>, click on any tab, and then click on the **2 Second Survey** icon. It's that easy. Survey results are posted immediately.

TPI Midwinter Conference

January 30—February 3, 2012
Scottsdale, Arizona



STAY AT THE HOST HOTEL

\$100 REFUND VOUCHER

Qualifications for redemption of Refund Voucher:

- Minimum three (3) nights stay at Montelucia Resort & Spa
- Full Conference Package Registration
- Hotel reservations made by 12/29/11
- One Refund Voucher per room

Qualifying Refund Vouchers must be redeemed at the TPI Registration Desk during the following hours:

Thursday, February 2nd, 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Friday, February 3rd, 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
(Please complete the back of card prior to redemption)

Refund Vouchers will expire on Friday, February 3rd at 1:30 p.m.
NO EXCEPTIONS!

...MARKING THE PATH TO NEW OPPORTUNITIES

For more information go to:

<http://www.turfgrassod.org/publisher/events/2011/8/30/tpi-midwinter-conference>

TurfSide-UP

FILED UNDER:

A turfgrass FAN-atic



Dan Taylor of Sutton Coldfield in the West Midlands of England was so excited during last year's World Cup in South Africa that he spent hours laying 100 sq. ft. of turf in the lounge of his mum's* two bedroom semi-detached house.



"All my mates thought I was mental when they found out what I had done, but then when they saw it they all came round and we had a sit on the pitch and a couple of beers. There's nothing better than sitting watching the match with the feel of fresh grass underneath your feet. Every morning the first thing I do is give it a little sprinkle with the watering can then I go round with a pair of scissors to make sure it's neat and tidy." - Dan Taylor

* The press did not report how Dan's mother Catherine, reacted to the unexpected transformation. We can only hope she shares his enthusiasm for soccer . . . and grass.

Photos: Carters News Agency LTD.

TEXAS Turfgrass growers address drought strategies



Writer Dan Robertson of YNN, Your News Now, reports that Central Texas is currently experiencing their worst drought in more than 50 years, and for many locals, the dry conditions are turning into a growing threat to their livelihood.

Texas turfgrass growers represent a \$7 billion industry. Landscapers, gardeners and other growers have all been hit by the current drought.

In response to the current situation the City of Waco hosted a seminar to give landscape water users and turfgrass producers new strategies to cope with the drought. Recent studies show that many types of lawn turf and grasses can be highly drought resistant if watered properly.

State turfgrass specialist **Dr. David Chalmers** who provided an informative presentation during the seminar told Robertson, "We are going through a historic drought. We are rethinking the plant materials we use in

a landscape, and we need to get education out there on how people can put measured amounts of water on their landscape for a predictable kind of quality."

One tool presented at the meeting was the Texas A&M Agri-Life Extension website which calculates daily water needs for different kinds of crops and turf.

Perhaps Ricky Garrett, City of Waco Utility Director said it best, "Waco is in pretty good shape right now but we always need to figure out how we can use the water more wisely because there's not any more of it."



Dr. Chalmers is noted for overseeing the two-year (2007-2008) San Antonio Water System (SAWS) Drought Research Study that compared 25 turfgrass varieties, including several types of St. Augustine grass, bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, and buffalograss. He has also been a long time supporter of Turfgrass Producers International.

To see Dan Robertson's full video report on YNN click here:
http://austin.ynn.com/content/top_stories/281493/turf-growers-swap-drought-strategies

Do you have a story that might interest our readers?

We have had inquiries as to why some member's seem to be featured frequently in the TPI E-Newsletter. The reason is really quite simple - - they submit stories for consideration. If you have a story that you think would be of interest to our readers, please let us know.

Submit your stories or ideas to: jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org.

The following are just a few topics of interest:

- Awards, honors and recognition
- TV, radio or print coverage
- Participation in green industry shows
- Open house or field day activities
- Innovative marketing ideas
- New website announcement
- Special projects
- Sports field installation
- Golf course installation
- Clever promotion
- Assisting in university research
- Community involvement
- Charity and volunteer projects
- Local and state government activities
- Special appointments
- Humorous story

Imagine a **GREEN ROOF** nearly 2-1/4 miles long



An artist's illustration of the proposed GREEN ROOF that will cover a portion of the A7 motorway in Hamburg, Germany.

The A7 motorway in Hamburg, Germany is a major highway spanning six to eight lanes of traffic that connects Germany with Scandinavia. Hamburg residents and many others say it creates a physical barrier between neighborhoods, it is noisy, and heavy truck traffic lowers air quality.

In response to these concerns the Hamburg government came up with a rather creative solution – cover the expressway with a large green roof.

The current plan calls for installing a 34-meter-wide and 2- to 3-meter-thick canopy over the A7 motorway in three sections, covering a total of 3.5 kilometers (nearly 2-1/4 miles).

This wouldn't be the first roadway to be covered in Germany; other canopies can be found in Düsseldorf and Munich, but the A7 cover in Hamburg will be the largest in Germany.

The first of the three sections to be built will be the Stellingen section, which will include 893 meters of wooded parkland and garden plots for Hamburg residents. Future sections will include meadows, pathways and more garden allotments.



BEFORE: Illustration of the current motorway.



AFTER: Illustration of the proposed green area covering the motorway.



Designers envision large meadows for recreation and much of the cover will be designated parkland, adding green space to surrounding neighborhoods and helping to keep storm water from entering the city's sewer system.

The green roof cover is expected to cost €600 - €700 million, mostly financed by the federal government, but some of the funding will also come from selling city-owned land adjacent to the autobahn.

So when will this seemingly brilliant idea come to fruition? Believe it or not, construction is set to begin in 2012.

Story and photo credit: Inhabitat.com