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Researchers continue to take a closer look at crumb rubber.

By Jim Novak

When Environment and Human Health, Inc. (EHHI), released a study several months ago that was done at Yale University showing there were 96 chemicals in crumb rubber used as surfacing in toddler playgrounds and on sports fields, more than a few people weren't surprised. But what was surprising was the fact that of the 96 chemicals detected – nearly half had NO previous toxicity assessments done on them for their health effects - therefore nothing is known about them. The other half had SOME toxicity testing done on them - but many of those chemicals had incomplete toxicity testing and therefore all health effects are not fully known.

Of the half that had toxicity assessments, 20% are probable carcinogens. 40% of the chemicals in that group were found to be irritants. 24% are respiratory irritants - some causing asthma symptoms; 37% are skin irritants; and 27% can cause eye irritants.

It should be noted that the study did not analyze for the carbon black that makes up to 30% of each tire, nor did it analyze the carbon black nanoparticles or the nanotubes that are now used in the manufacture of tires. The study also did not test for heavy metals. It is known from other studies that rubber tires contain large amounts of zinc. These additional substances add to the toxicity of the shredded rubber tires that are presently used in both synthetic turf fields and toddler playgrounds.

The following comments by individuals associated with the study are worth noting:

"Not surprisingly, the shredded tires contain a veritable witches' brew of toxic substances. It seems irresponsible to market a hazardous waste as a consumer product." - Gaboury Benoit, Ph.D., Yale Professor of Environmental Chemistry and Engineering



Graphic: Jim Novak

"From the data of this new study, it is reasonable to assume that persons playing on synthetic turf fields with rubber tire infill or toddler playgrounds surfaced with rubber tire mulch are being exposed concurrently to multiple chemicals."
 - David Brown, Sc.D. Public Health Toxicologist

"This study should give pause to all those schools, towns, and government agencies that have told the public these fields are safe. Exposing toddlers, students and athletes to this many chemicals, many at the same time, seems like an incredibly irresponsible experiment in people's health and needs to come to an abrupt end." - Nancy Alderman, President of Environment and Human Health, Inc.

California officials recently announced they have authorized spending \$2.9 million to study the health effects of crumb rubber. They expect to report their results in three years. In the meantime, the debate is sure to go on and so too are the unknown health consequences of crumb rubber.

The Environment and Human Health, Inc. (EHHI), press release can be viewed in its entirety at:
http://www.ehhi.org/turf/new_study_jun2015.shtml

See additional stories on crumb rubber health concerns on the following pages including the ESPN E-60 video report titled "The Turf War" and recent news out of Hong Kong expressing concerns about artificial turf's high field temperatures. — JN

In search of direct answers— Is Crumb Rubber Safe?

[The Turf War - ESPN Video](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhHmlyoTj9M>

By Jim Novak

The concern about the health and safety of children and student athletes who play on artificial turf's crumb rubber isn't going away, it's actually escalating. The Consumer Product Safety Commission, which indicated back in April that they no longer stood by the safety of crumb rubber used on artificial turf and playgrounds, has also stated they are not investigating further because they don't have the resources at the present time. When Gina McCarthy, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was asked by an NBC reporter about the issue as recently as early October she responded, "I have nothing to say on that right now." Responses such as "I have no comment", "more research is needed", or "no further research is planned" have only added to a growing concern.

Amy Griffin, the soccer coach at the University of Washington, who made national news when she reported a trend in cancer among soccer players who play on artificial turf's crumb rubber has seen her list grow from 38 soccer players with cancer (reported in October 2014 on NBC Nightly News) to 187 athletes, including 150 soccer players, 95 of which are goalies.

Representatives of synthetic turf who suggest that such news is anecdotal and represents a very small sampling of the millions of people who played on or used synthetic turf is of little comfort to parents and others who have expressed their concerns.

Major television networks and cable news outlets have touched on the story. WJLA-TV ABC 7 in Washington, D.C. recently reported there are as many as 12,000 artificial turf fields across the country and asks the question —"Are these fields causing cancer?"

Most recently, ESPN's E:60 aired, "[The Turf War](#)" featuring former U.S. National Soccer Team midfielder Julie Foudy as she investigated the use of crumb rubber on synthetic turf fields by "talking to those who make it, those who have studied it, those who play on it, including an exclusive interview with the EPA's McCarthy, with one question in mind . . . Is artificial turf safe?"



As recently as October 23 the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce sent a letter to McCarthy addressing the growing concern regarding crumb rubber and they want immediate answers.

McCarthy was advised to respond to a series of questions by the 6th of November. The following are but of a few of the many questions submitted to McCarthy for a prompt response:

- Has the EPA conducted additional testing to fully assess the hazards and exposures associated with crumb rubber on artificial turf athletic fields?
- Is the EPA aware of other scientific studies on the hazards and/or exposures associated with crumb rubber on athletic fields?
- To the best of your knowledge, do chemical substances, or a chemical substance in crumb rubber present a hazard to human health? If so, has the EPA determined whether exposure to such a chemical from crumb rubber presents an unreasonable risk to human health?
- Do data indicate that risk is greater for female athletes than for male athletes, for soccer players than for lacrosse, field hockey, or football players, and for one position in soccer more than for others?
- To the best of your knowledge, is the incidence [of cancer or other health issues] for persons who play on fields treated with crumb rubber higher than in the general population?
- Has the EPA identified a specific pathway of exposure to hazardous materials in crumb rubber, e.g., inhalation, ingestion, or skin absorption?
- Are you aware of any industry standards that set limits for exposure to crumb rubber based on potential health hazards? What analysis supports those standards?

UPDATE: The EPA failed to adhere to the deadline. On Friday, November 6 EPA spokesperson Liz Purchia told NBC News that the agency was "in the process of responding" to the Energy Committee's list of questions. As of this writing they still had not responded. We will continue to report on this important issue as more news becomes available. Look for updates in future newsletters and on TPI's Facebook page.

As featured in [The South China Morning Post](#)

Hong Kong researchers express their concerns about artificial turf.

Academic warns — Heat given off by artificial fields poses health risk to athletes and children.

By Jim Novak

The South China Morning Post reports that the first comprehensive study on heat stress and artificial turf in Hong Kong raises some serious concerns. The Post reported that data compiled by Professor Jim Chi-yung, chair professor of geography at the University of Hong Kong, shows that the surface temperature of artificial turf can be 90 percent hotter than the air temperature in summer and that athletes and children are particularly vulnerable to "heat stress" and the risk of heat stroke. This adds to concerns that artificial turf can intensify urban temperatures, contributing to the heat island effect.

According to Chi-yung's data, the surface temperature of artificial turf in 35 °C heat (95 °F) can shoot up to a sizzling 70°C (158 °F) while real turf peaks no higher than 38°C (100 °F). Chi-Yung also found that the air temperature 50cm (19.6 in) above ground was higher than temperatures at 150cm (59 inches), meaning small children were at greater risk to high heat exposure.

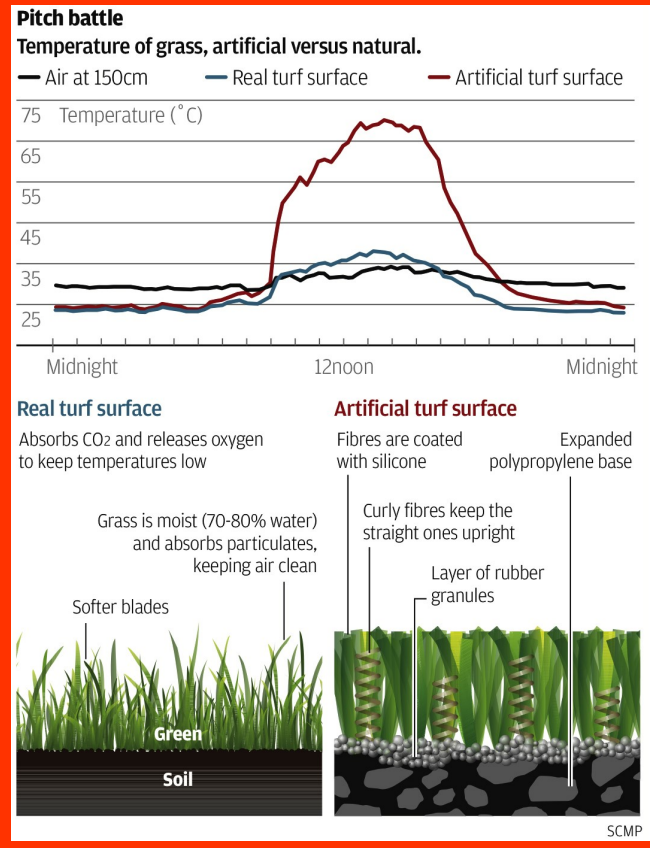
The research also found that heat stress - the effect of heat in generating pressure or discomfort on the body - to be far greater on artificial turf pitches than natural grass pitches.

"A human being will not be feeling just the air temperature but the heat sensation," Chi-yung said.

The Post went on to state that Chi-yung spent two summers collecting data at the university's Stanley Ho Sports Centre complex in Sandy Bay over the course of about 10 consecutive days with a heat stress monitoring system comprising infrared radiometers and temperature sensors at different levels from the ground.

"Natural grass pitches serve important ecosystem purposes and help mitigate the urban heat island effect - the increase in temperatures in urban areas compared with suburban areas due to urbanization. Water evaporation from natural turf produced a cooling effect," Chi-yung said. He criticized the policy of replacing natural turf with artificial grass, noting that the trend in cities such as Singapore and in Japan was to convert more hard ground into grass.

"It is very disappointing that while every developed country is working to reduce the urban heat island effect, the government here is doing things to intensify it," he said.



Although The Leisure and Cultural Services Department in Hong Kong is committed to replacing most natural grass pitches with artificial ones to raise "availability and quality" - and reduce maintenance costs, Chi-yung isn't the only person expressing concerns over such a decision. Professor Edward Ng Yung-yan, an expert in sustainable architecture and urban climatology at Chinese University, is quoted as saying, even if thermal effects were localized and not directly related to the urban heat island of an entire city, there was no running away from the fact that more natural grass would help to cool down a city.

"The key scientific reason is water evaporation," Ng said, pointing out that evapotranspiration cools both the turf and the air above. "Real grass, not the fake stuff, has a cooling benefit for entire neighborhoods." Ng said studies had shown that grass cools the surrounding air by about one degree and reduces radiation temperature by 20 to 30 degrees.

"Real grass is harder to maintain, but it's not impossible," Ng said. "While other cities are moving from the concept of 'garden in a city' to 'city in a garden', we are reversing the trend entirely."

To read the [South China Post](#) article in its entirety go to:

<http://t.co/tcaybwxAgd>

The Lawn Institute releases two new infographics

Water Conservation & Lawn Care

“You can save water and still have a healthy lawn.”

Carbon Sequestration

“Turfgrass can serve as a sink for CO₂.”

YOU CAN SAVE WATER AND STILL HAVE A HEALTHY LAWN

The EPA reports that as much as 50% of the water used for outdoor use is wasted because of inefficient watering methods and systems. Make sure that your lawn reaps the full benefit whenever you water it.

One inch of rainfall drops 7,000 gallons, or nearly 30 tons of water, on a 60 foot by 180 foot piece of land.

70% A typical residential above ground drip water system used for perennial gardens, shrubs, trees, vegetable gardens and sometimes for edging of irregular shaped lawns can reduce water use by more than 70 percent versus traditional hoses or automatic sprinklers.

One broken sprinkler-head could waste up to 25,000 gallons of water over a six-month irrigation season.
SOURCE: WaterSense U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

You can allow an established lawn to go dormant. During dry periods just water your lawn once a month and brown areas will green up again when water is available.

- Water early in the morning or in the evening to prevent daytime evaporation.
- Don't use sprinklers on rainy or windy days.
- Water the lawn – not the sidewalk, driveway or street.
- If grass springs back when you walk on it, it doesn't need water.
- Watering just twice a week can save over 50 percent of water. Grass does not need to be watered every day.

REDUCE EVAPORATION

During a dry spell or a drought allow your lawn to grow to the upper range of the local recommendations of mowing heights for your turfgrass variety. Taller grass blades promote deeper roots and shade the soil, resulting in less water evaporation.

1" **IF YOU USE WATER WISELY YOUR LAWN WILL TOO!**

On an average, a lawn only needs about one inch (2.5 cm) of water per week, either by irrigation, rainfall, or a combination of both.

- Water only when needed.
- Saturate root zones and let the soil dry.
- Watering too much and too frequently results in shallow roots, weed growth, disease and fungus.

For helpful information about lawns and proper lawn care visit TheLawnInstitute.org

To download INFOGRAPHICS go to: <http://www.thelawninstitute.org/pages/helpful-hints-from-the-lawn-institute/>

The Potential of Turfgrass to Sequester Carbon and Offset Greenhouse Gas Emissions

“Turfgrass is often seen as a high input landscape feature and as such has acquired a bad reputation because of the negative consequences associated with high input management. Fertilizer and pesticides applied in excess can run off turf areas and contaminate local waterways. Additionally, lawn mowers, aerators, and other turf maintenance equipment release greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere.

“Through the process of photosynthesis, all plants remove carbon dioxide from the air and utilize it to form new growth, including root mass. As turfgrass roots die, they decompose into soil organic matter, fixing carbon in the soil. In this way, turf areas can sometimes be carbon sinks for greenhouse gases rather than a source.”

By Madeline Leslie
Graduate Research Assistant
University of Minnesota

“Despite these negative impacts, turfgrass actually has the potential to offset emissions by sequestering carbon dioxide.

See The Lawn Institute’s INFOGRAPHIC on carbon sequestration and lawns.





U.S. LAWNS Remove 5% OF THE CARBON DIOXIDE IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

TURFGRASS CAN SERVE AS A SINK FOR CO₂

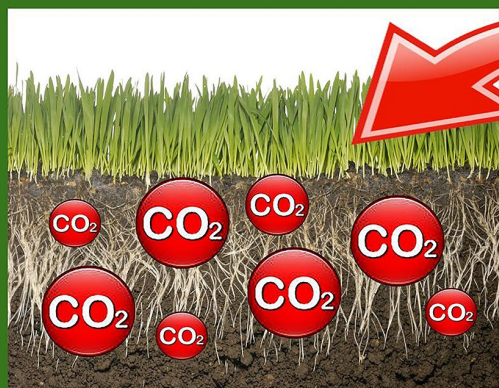


Combating global warming by sequestering carbon.

CO₂

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), the international trade association representing the small engine, utility vehicle, and outdoor power equipment manufacturing industry points out the many benefits of lawns.

“Many people don’t realize that their turfgrass is hard at work and they are ‘using’ it 24-7. You may not be outside all the time, but you are still benefiting from your lawn, even when you are asleep,” said Kris Kiser, president and CEO of OPEI. “Your lawn provides a wealth of environment and lifestyle benefits to you, and it enriches the community for everyone.”



LAWNS CAN STORE ATMOSPHERIC CARBON AT A HIGH RATE DUE TO HIGH PRODUCTION AND HIGH ROOT TURNOVER.

IF PEOPLE RECYCLE GRASS CLIPPINGS, LEAVING THEM TO DECOMPOSE ON THE LAWN, THE U.S. LAWN AREA COULD STORE UP TO 16.7 TERAGRAMS OF CARBON EACH YEAR.



THAT’S EQUIVALENT TO AROUND 37 BILLION POUNDS - THAT’S THE WEIGHT OF ABOUT 147,000 BLUE WHALES.

Turfgrass is the largest carbon sink in the country. Grasses remove about six tons of carbon dioxide per acre per year from the atmosphere. Carbon sinks absorb from the atmosphere the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, which is warming up our planet. It’s estimated that up to 800 pounds of carbon per acre is sequestered by turfgrass each year. That’s 20 million tons of carbon being removed from the atmosphere each year in the U.S.



GOLF GREENS AND FAIRWAYS STORE NEARLY A TON OF CARBON PER ACRE PER YEAR.

Sources:

Follett, R.F. 2003. Are Golf Courses Holding the Carbon? Turfgrass as a “Sink” for CO₂. Agricultural Research.

National Turfgrass Federation. 2006. The U.S. Turfgrass Industry.

Qian, Y. and R.F. Follett. 2002. Assessing Soil Carbon Sequestration in Turfgrass Systems Using Long-Term Soil Testing Data. Agron. J. 94:930-935.

Cristina Milesi - Ecological forecasting research group at NASA’s Ames Research Center in California. Milesi, C., S.W. Running, C.D. Elvidge, J.B. Dietz, B.T. Tuttle, R.R. Nemani. (2005) Mapping and modeling the biogeochemical cycling of turf grasses in the United States. Environmental Management 36(3), 426-438.

For more information about lawns and lawn care visit The Lawn Institute at <http://www.TheLawnInstitute.org/>

The dense canopy and fibrous root system in a lawn sequesters carbon so well that it outweighs the carbon used for maintaining the grass.



The “honest mistake” that led to a high school sports field disaster has a bright side after all.



Before and after photos of St. Edward High School football field.

By Jim Novak

When the home field at St. Edward High School in Elgin, Illinois was ruined because workers from a firm hired to maintain the field sprayed weed killer on the grass instead of fertilizer there were no doubt serious consequences for a good number of responsible individuals.

Through the unpleasant ordeal one individual appears to have kept his cool, at least when he spoke to the media. The school's athletic director, P. J. White.

White was quoted by the Chicago Tribune as saying, "It was an honest mistake made in the mixing of chemicals for the field and they [the contractor] feel terrible about it. Someone grabbed the wrong bottle when they were mixing the chemicals."

White reportedly went on to say, "If there's any kind of blessing, or anything like that, it's that we have needed resurfacing of the playing field for a time. After this season it would be an ideal time to look at that."

It would appear there was a “blessing” associated with this unfortunate incident and it came by means of the folks at Scotts Miracle-Gro.

THE **Scotts Miracle-Gro**
COMPANY

The Chicago Tribune reports that as part of the Scotts Miracle-Gro [#KeepItReal](#) campaign, which is dedicated to repairing athletic fields across the country, Scotts donated the products and services to install a new athletic-grade sod field at the school. The project was completed Oct. 3 and saved the school \$200,000, according to the Chicago Tribune.

The Tribune quotes Josh Peoples, vice president and general manager of Scotts as stating, “Given the unfortunate situation at St. Edward High School, restoring their football field was a natural fit for us. The surface these athletes play on is just as important as how they play the game – we wanted to do the right thing for this team.”

“The grass was always greener on the other side this past month but we’re fortunate to have new sod and play our last football game on Senior Night at home,” said White. “We are thankful to the generosity of Scotts and are excited to be back on our home field.”

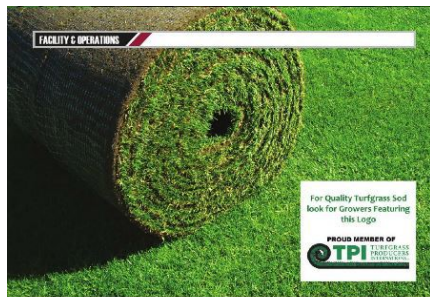
“Our only goal was to make sure the team could end this season on a high note at home,” said Peoples. He added, “This field refurbishment is just another extension of our desire to see all athletes from youth sports to professional be given the opportunity to play on real natural grass.”

A tip of the hat to the folks at Scotts Miracle-Gro.

- See more at: <http://globenewswire.com/news-release/2015/10/23/779624/0/en/Scotts-R-and-Former-Professional-Football-Star-Brian-Urlacher-Welcome-St-Edward-High-School-Football-Team-Back-Home-to-Newly-Refurbished-Field.html#sthash.Ngn4j76N.dpuf>

SportsTurf

SPORTS FIELD AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT



A PROFILE OF THE TURFGRASS PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

FACILITY & OPERATIONS



10 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR TURFGRASS PROVIDER

Our thanks to SportsTurf Magazine, the official publication of the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA), for featuring TPI and a few of our members in recent articles.

SportsTurf magazine article for June 2015 (Pages 36, 37 and 38)

A PROFILE OF TURFGRASS PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Turfgrass Producers International is one of the most influential turfgrass associations in the world made up of turfgrass producers from more than 40 countries and yet not all sports field managers, golf course superintendents, grounds managers and others responsible for overseeing, managing and maintaining turfgrass know the letters T-P-I. The leadership of Turfgrass Producers International hopes to change that!

<http://read.dmtmag.com/i/517437-june-2015/36>

SportsTurf magazine article for October 2015 (Pages 16, 17,18 and19)

TEN QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR TURFGRASS PROVIDER.

What top ten questions should sports field managers be asking turfgrass producers who provide their sod? Comments from Julie Adamski, Director of Retail & Professional Development for Sod Solutions; Jerad R. Minnick long-time sports field manager and Founder of Growing Innovations; Joe Traficano, Sales Manager for West Coast Turf; Allen Carter Jr., farm manager for Tuckahoe Turf Farms, and David Millar of Red Hen Turf Farm reveal one thing with certainty—every situation can present its own set of questions.

<http://read.dmtmag.com/i/575944-october-2015>

The Lawn Institute reaches over 7 million readers of USA TODAY



The Lawn Institute's mention in USA TODAY and USATODAY.com reached a combined seven million readers. Mobile device applications may have generated as many as 21 million USA TODAY downloads.



A family of four can get their daily oxygen needs met by

50 square feet of grass.

SOURCE: OPEI/The Lawn Institute. Terry Bryne and Paul Trap, USA TODAY



PLANNING TO TRAVEL ACROSS THE POND? WANT TO VISIT A TURFGRASS FARM IN THE UK?

TPI members who plan to travel to the UK and would like to visit a fellow turfgrass producer during their visit are encouraged to contact Tim Mudge, Chief Executive of Turfgrass Growers Association Ltd. in advance so Mudge and TGA members can help coordinate the visit.



ACROSS the POND



In a letter to TPI, Mudge wrote, "If any TPI members are ever in the UK and we can help them get in contact with a UK turf producer please ask them to contact us. We're always happy to help better communications and the knowledge transfer between TGA and TPI."

If you are planning a visit to the UK in the near future and would like to visit a turfgrass producer we encourage you to reach out to Tim so you don't miss a great opportunity.

CONTACT: Tim Mudge

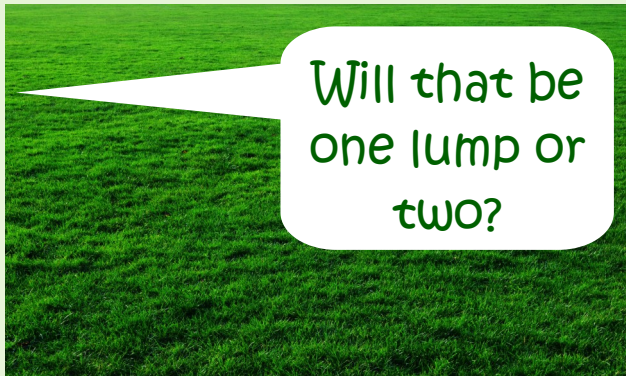
Turfgrass Growers Association Ltd

BGA House, Nottingham Road, Louth, Lincolnshire, LN11 0WB

E: tim.mudge@britishgrowers.org **W:** www.turfgrass.co.uk

T: +44 (0)1507 607722 **F:** +44 (0)1507 600689

"I walked all over the yard and found it lumpy."



TPI recently received the following email from a homeowner.

I recently had my back yard re-sodded by a local landscaper, and they used sod from _____ Sod.

After the installation, I walked all over the yard and found it very lumpy. When I ask the landscaper about it, he says that is what he gets from the sod company.

I know that the yard was prepared exceptionally carefully, compacted to the same density throughout and carefully raked to be very smooth everywhere. None of the lumpiness is caused by the soil beneath the sod.

Question: Is _____ sod uniform in thickness, or is the landscaper correct in their thinking as to the reason the lawn is lumpy?

Thanks

We did provide the homeowner with a few possibilities, all of which ruled out the likelihood that the lumpy sod was harvested by the turfgrass producer. Dr. Hank Wilkinson's explanation from an article he wrote some years ago seems to suggest the most likely cause. —J. Novak

"Putting down sod on Saturday and playing football on Sunday is something you don't want to do (although I've seen this from time to time)! While the grass is not that fragile after it's properly installed, some caution is necessary. Walking across a soggy, new lawn can compress the soil, but most often it leaves a series of depressions in the lawn that may never fully recover. Also, any lateral movement or shearing (running around on the sod by humans or dogs!) should be avoided for the first four to six weeks."

How YOU Can Botch the Start of a Sodded Lawn

Dr. Hank Wilkinson, Professor Emeritus
University of Illinois, Urbana, IL.



ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES RECEIVING THE TPI E-NEWSLETTER?

Much to our surprise a good number of the employees of TPI members aren't receiving this newsletter. It's FREE! And it features timely news and a wide variety of informative and entertaining stories that provide readers with a bigger picture of the turfgrass industry.

The TPI E-Newsletter is uniquely different from traditional newsletters in that it provides an enjoyable mix of industry news, timely information, satire, personal stories, research updates, new product innovations and a wide variety of industry-related information that offers readers a better understanding of the turfgrass industry and a greater sense of appreciation of your business and the role they play in driving your company's success.

We're sure the TPI E-Newsletter would be well received by everyone associated with your business so be sure to have them sign-up!



Subscribing is easy! They just have to go to <http://www.turfgrassod.org/subscriptions>. They only need to provide their name and email address and we'll take care of the rest. Their email address will not be shared with anyone.

Have them sign-up TODAY!



The Lawn Institute is now accepting applications for the **Dr. Henry W. Indyk 2016 Scholarship**

Up to \$10,000 Awarded

Application Deadline: January 8, 2016

Visit: TheLawnInstitute.org to download your scholarship application or contact The Lawn Institute at +1-847-649-5555

Available to Turfgrass Producers International Class A & B members, their families, their employees, and their employees' families who will be attending college or graduate school during the 2016-17 academic year.



SEED WITH CONFIDENCE

Because your business depends on the purest seed varieties, our business is dedicated to them.



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





What do avocados, tomatoes and turfgrass have in common?

By Jim Novak

One might think that avocados, tomatoes and turfgrass have little in common but, actually, they do. They are all Specialty Crops. That was especially good news for the University of Florida when their Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences researchers learned the university was awarded \$11 million in federal grants to study specialty crops. Over \$4 million of the grant funding was committed to developing turfgrass with improved drought responses. That was great news for the turfgrass researchers and it could be even better news for the turfgrass industry as a whole.

The grants were announced Oct. 5 by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Randy Ploetz, a plant pathology professor at the UF/IFAS Tropical Research and Education Center in Homestead, Florida, will use \$3.4 million to study how to stem the impact of laurel wilt on avocados.

Gary Vallad, an associate professor of plant pathology at the UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center in Balm, Florida, will use \$3.4 million to improve the management of a bacterial disease that plagues tomato production.



And Kevin Kenworthy, associate professor of agronomy, was pleased to learn he received \$4.4 million to study drought resistance in certain turfgrasses.

Kenworthy will work with scientists at Texas A&M, Oklahoma State, North Carolina State and the University of Georgia to further test warm season turfgrasses for their water requirements and ability to persist under long-term drought conditions.

“These turfgrasses responded favorably to short-term drought in a previous USDA-funded project involving the same universities,” Kenworthy said.

He added, “Our newly funded project will involve input from turfgrass breeders, plant physiologists, turfgrass management specialists, turfgrass Extension Specialists, economists and statisticians, and it will provide information relative to these advanced lines for their sod and weed management practices. A significant component of the project will involve Extension efforts to learn more about what the industry understands regarding drought responses of turf, what traits are most important to end users and the development of educational tools to inform the industry about new drought-resistant turfgrasses that may become commercially available from this project.”

NOTE:

The classification of turfgrass sod as a specialty crop was greatly influenced by TPI's active involvement in collaboration with other turfgrass organizations in communicating with key government decision makers requesting that turfgrass be included as a specialty crop under the program.

The following is an excerpt from a letter drafted by TPI to the USDA back in 2008 on the issue:

“Turfgrass Producers International 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.”

Thanks to a collaborative effort, turfgrass was acknowledged as a specialty crop.

**Specialty Crop
Block Grant
Program**



Join Us EARLY BIRD Special

**REGISTER NOW
AND SAVE!**

**To take advantage of the
Savings and register by
December 18, 2015**

To register and see the full color brochure of events go to:

<http://www.turfgrassod.org/publisher/events/2012/10/30/international-education-conference-and-field-day>

TPI's 2016 International Education Conference & Field Day will be jam-packed with over twenty participating speakers and panelists who will be addressing a wide variety of topics.

There will be plenty of optional activities too; a "Rootin' Tootin' Clay Shootin' event, a tour of Houston sites, and a fun-filled Topgolf "Bogey Nights" that's sure to provide an evening of entertainment for all.

Add to that a great Field Day at **All Seasons Turf Grass** and you have a schedule of events and social activities with something for everyone.

TPI has also negotiated a special discounted rate of only \$195 per night at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Houston.

This is one TPI event you won't want to miss. Make your reservations now for what's sure to be an outstanding and memorable event!

The Lawn Institute Fundraising Opportunities

TPI's 2016 International Education Conference & Field Day



Bling Out Your Cowboy Hat

Looking for a great team-building exercise? Or a new way to flex your creative muscles? Decorate one of the cowboy hats that TLI provides and put it on display at the TPI conference registration desk: you could win a free hotel room for up to two nights at the TPI 2017 International Education Conference & Field Day in **Tampa, Florida!**

Here's how to enter:

Sponsor a hat*, supplied by TLI. TLI will have the hat shipped to you at least four weeks before the **Houston** conference to decorate as you wish: farm or company logos, "bling", LED lights...let your creativity run wild.

Bring the hat with you to the TPI 2016 International Education Conference & Field Day in Houston, Texas and display it in the registration area.

Encourage conference attendees to vote for your hat as the best in one of two categories: Most Creative Hat and Funniest Hat.

Obtain the most votes and win a free hotel room for up to two nights at the TPI 2017 International Education Conference & Field Day in **Tampa, Florida!**

*Hats will be donated to TLI for auction following the contest. Each hat sponsorship is \$350.

ROOTIN' TOOTIN' CLAY SHOOTIN'



Rootin' Tootin' Clay Shootin'

Support TLI and help to fund research and scholarships for the turfgrass production industry! Instead of The Lawn Institute Memorial Golf Tournament, TLI is offering the Rootin' Tootin' Clay Shootin' Tournament in 2016.

Station Sponsor: \$300

Includes a sign at the station with your farm or company logo and recognition as a sponsor in the onsite Pocket Program, distributed to all conference attendees.

Shell Pouch Sponsor: \$1,750

Includes your farm or company logo on a shell pouch, distributed to all tournament contestants to use during the sporting clay shoot and to keep as a souvenir. Recognition as a sponsor will also appear in the onsite Pocket Program, distributed to all conference attendees.

Breakfast: \$2,000

Includes a sign at breakfast with your farm or company logo and recognition as a sponsor in the onsite Pocket Program, distributed to all conference attendees.

Beverages: (TBD)

Includes a sign at the beverage cart and recognition as a sponsor in the onsite Pocket Program, distributed to all conference attendees. Actual costs will be billed to the sponsor after the event.

Information about registering to participate in Rootin' Tootin' Clay Shootin' is available in the TPI 2016 International Education Conference & Field Day Registration Brochure, or visit www.TurfGrassSod.org.

2016 Gun Raffle

The Lawn Institute is hosting a gun raffle and there are some terrific prizes! Purchase raffle tickets and you'll have a chance of winning one or more of 10 fine guns.*

RAFFLE PRIZES	SPONSORED BY
Browning Citori 725 Over/Under Shot Gun	Trebro Manufacturing
Remington 1100 - 20 Gauge Shot Gun	Turf Merchants Inc.
Benellia Nova 12 Gauge Pump, Camo Pattern	Patten Seed/Super Sod
Henry Octagon Barrel - 45 Long Colt Repeating Rifle	Brouwer Kesmac
PSA M4 Style AR-15 w/30 round clip	Sod Solutions
Savage HRM 17 with scope & accutrigger; camo pattern	Pennington Seed
Magnum 44	Bucyrus Equipment
Ruger Vaquero 6" Barrel - Classic 6 shooter	The Turfgrass Group
Bersa Thunder 380 Pistol with pink grips	Texas Sod Leasing
Smith & Wesson M&P Sport 15 223/5.56 AR Style camo pattern	Texas Sod Leasing

* A VISA gift card equivalent to the stated market value of the gun can be substituted as a prize at the raffle winner's discretion.

Raffle tickets are \$25 each or five for \$100. Tickets are on sale through February 24, 2016 or while supplies lasts – no more than 1,000 tickets will be sold. Order tickets at www.TheLawnInstitute.org or call The Lawn Institute at +1-847-649-5555.

Official Rules are posted on The Lawn Institute website. Winning tickets will be pulled on February 24, 2016 during the Bogey Nights outing at the TPI International Education Conference & Field Day, Houston, Texas. **Winner need not be present to win.** Proceeds go to support The Lawn Institute scholarships and turfgrass research grants.

Helicopter Rides

Fly into the wild blue yonder...for 8-10 minutes. TLI is offering helicopter rides during the 2016 Field Day at All Seasons Turf Grass. Only 36 spots are available. Rides will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis for \$150 per person, sign-up begins at 9:30 am on February 24. Flight times between: 12:30—3:30 pm. Sponsored by Horizon Turf Grass, Inc.



Bogey Nights

Join us for a fun evening out at Houston's Topgolf. Anyone can play Topgolf, from aspiring pros to those who've never walked 18 holes. All you have to do is swing a club and try to hit your microchipped balls into dartboard-like targets. It's competitive. It's fun. And it's always better with a three hours of play. Cost: \$118 per person.

Information about registering to participate in Topgolf is available in the TPI 2016 International Education Conference & Field Day Registration Brochure, or visit www.TurfGrassSod.org.



John Deere Landscapes becomes SiteOne Landscape Supply.



John Deere Landscapes unveiled its new name and logo as SiteOne Landscape Supply, effective October 19. The new brand was formally introduced to customers at the recent GIE+EXPO in Louisville, Kentucky.

The new brand represents the next step for SiteOne as an independent company after its acquisition by Clayton, Dubilier & Rice in December 2013.

With over 460 locations in the U.S. and Canada, SiteOne is the largest wholesale distributor of landscape supplies for green industry professionals in North America, including irrigation supplies, fertilizer and control products, landscape accessories, nursery goods,

hardscapes, and outdoor lighting, along with a broad array of services designed to help green industry professionals operate and grow their businesses.

“We have an exciting new look and over 2,500 passionate and knowledgeable associates across North America, all focused on the success of our customers. The new brand reflects our unique position as the only national full-line provider of landscaping products which, along with the deep knowledge and state-of-the-art solutions that we offer, will form our foundation for future growth and we will continue to deliver the high quality products and services our customers know and trust,” said Doug Black, SiteOne’s chief executive officer.



THANK YOU! TPI's FACEBOOK PAGE REACHES NEW MILESTONE – OVER 800 LIKES

To visit the TPI Facebook page click on the graphic to the left or go to <https://www.facebook.com/TurfgrassProducersInternational>.

You don't have to be a Facebook subscriber to visit the page. If you are already a Facebook subscriber, be sure to click **LIKE**.

TIMED ONLINE AUCTION Bidding Closes: December 10 San Juan Bautista, CA

By Order of Board of Directors, Pacific Earth Resources Ltd - Closing the San Juan Bautista Location Only!

SOD & FARMING OPERATION

 • Farm Tractors • Sod Harvesters • Implements • Rolling Stock

<http://tauberaronsinc.com/events/sod-farming-operation/>





IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Lawn Institute is now accepting RESEARCH GRANT submissions for 2016

Completed applications must be received by December 1, 2015

The Lawn Institute is now accepting submissions for research grant funding that will be available beginning June 2016 for studies that impact turfgrass farmers, distributors, and consumers.

Of particular interest is research in the following areas:

- Cultural Impact of Turfgrass
- Extending Harvested Turf "Shelf Life"
- Environmental Awareness
- Production Cost
- Compilations and Summaries of Existing Research on:
 - * Nutrients and Pesticides
 - * The Role of Turfgrass in Protecting the Environment
 - * Benefits of Turfgrass

Access the links noted on this page to download all the materials you will need to submit a grant application.

Proposal must be submitted on the form provided or an exact duplicate. Grant awards will vary depending on the adjudged value of the project to the needs of the turfgrass sod production industry. Typical awards range from \$5,000 - \$10,000. However, all proposals will be considered regardless of the grant amount requested. For additional information, refer to the "Requirements of Principal Investigator/Institution" document.

In preparing the application, be sure that all pertinent information is typed (no smaller than 10-point type) in English. Completed applications must be received (not postmarked) at The Lawn Institute address (via mail, fax or email) by **December 1, 2015**.

THE LAWN INSTITUTE

2 East Main St.
East Dundee, IL 60118 USA
Phone: 800/405-8873 Fax: 847/649-5678
Email: info@TheLawnInstitute.org

Recommendations on grant awards will be made by The Lawn Institute Research Committee to The Lawn Institute Board of Trustees for final approval. Grant awards will be announced no later than May 2016. When submitting a proposal, remember that the selection committee is made up of industry representatives from around the world as well as research scientists. It is important that you clearly define the problem that your research addresses, the scope of the problem, and how your research addresses it as well as how your research will impact turfgrass producers. The Lawn Institute reserves the right to negotiate proprietary rights for projects on a per-grant basis including copyrights, source codes, and/or patents.

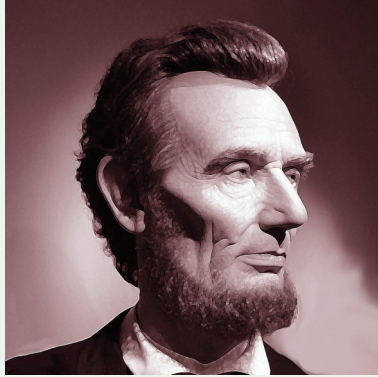
[For more information and to download application go to: http://www.thelawninstitute.org/pages/science/research-grants/](http://www.thelawninstitute.org/pages/science/research-grants/)

Application, Requirements of Principal Investigator/
Institution, Research Prioritized Objectives

ABOUT THE LAWN INSTITUTE:

The Lawn Institute was created in 1955 to assist in and encourage the improvement of lawns and sports turf through research and education. As the internationally recognized authority among turf professionals and scientists, The Lawn Institute monitors, interprets and reports on the latest advances in turfgrass research, landscape horticulture, and agronomic science. The Lawn Institute also funds research conducted by some of the world's most respected turfgrass scientists and institutions.

It is the desire of The Lawn Institute that natural turfgrass is utilized and properly cared for wherever it is applicable. For helpful and reliable information on lawns, proper lawn care, and for answers to your turfgrass and lawn questions, visit The Lawn Institute at: www.TheLawnInstitute.org



Life-like sculpture of Abraham Lincoln by Kazuhiro Tsuji at Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Library.

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND A TPI EVENT?

Abe Lincoln may have answered that question better than anyone when he spoke before the Members of the Agricultural Society and Citizens of Wisconsin in 1859. Although he was referring to agricultural fairs his observation can just as easily be associated with TPI events.

“... they bring us together, and thereby make us better acquainted, and better friends than we otherwise would be.”

Plan to join us at TPI's 2016 International Education Conference & Field Day in Houston this February and get acquainted with a few old friends while making a few new ones.

J.Novak

TRIVIA

“Every blade of grass is a study; and to produce two, where there was but one, is both a profit and a pleasure.” - Abraham Lincoln (1859)

By Jim Novak

When Abraham Lincoln expressed the following before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in September of 1859 in conjunction with the Wisconsin State Fair he was primarily known as the man who had debated Stephen Douglas during a race for the U.S. Senate.

“Every blade of grass is a study; and to produce two, where there was but one, is both a profit and a pleasure. And not grass alone; but soils, seeds, and seasons -- hedges, ditches, and fences, draining, droughts, and irrigation -- plowing, hoeing, and harrowing -- reaping, mowing, and threshing -- saving crops, pests of crops, diseases of crops, and what will prevent or cure them -- implements, utensils, and machines, their relative merits, and [how] to improve them -- hogs, horses, and cattle -- sheep, goats, and poultry -- trees, shrubs, fruits, plants, and flowers -- the thousand things of which these are specimens -- each a world of study within itself.”

It may have been the only public speech Lincoln ever gave regarding agriculture, but it was an indication of what was to come. One year later he would be elected president of the United States, and two years later he would sign the bill establishing the U.S. Department of Agriculture and sign into law the Morrill Act establishing Land Grant Universities.

Today there is at least one land-grant institution in every state and territory of the United States, as well as the District of Columbia. Certain southern states have two land-grant institutions as a result of the Second Morrill Act, and some western and plains states have several of the 1994 land-grant tribal colleges. Lincoln also established Thanksgiving as a national holiday in 1863.

The late Wayne D. Rasmussen who served as the Chief of the Agricultural History Branch—United States Department of Agriculture for more than three decades (1952-1986) once wrote:

“Although Lincoln's primary problem during his Presidency was preserving the Union, the agricultural legislation that he signed was to transform American farming.”

OOPS!

Corrections:

There were two errors in our September/October issue of the E-Newsletter.

Our Tuckahoe Turf story on vandals (featured on page 20) should have extended a thank you to **Allen Carter Jr.** for sharing the story with us. The name John was printed in error.

Our story on page 31 regarding NG Turf's generous donation of Zoysia sod to the Whole Foods Educational Farm should have been credited to writer **Karen Gorzynski**. Taylor McGlamery who was mistakenly identified as the writer, is actually responsible for NG Turf's social media. Our thanks to Helen Albrightson of NG Turf for bringing the latter to our attention.



New benefit for TPI Members



Helping you grow your business!



Save on all your printing needs with the TPI FedEx Office discount.

TurfSide-UP



So what's all the croaking about anyway?

Well, for starters, it's not easy being green; and that's just the half of it!

A new study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, by Yale and U.S. Geological Survey researchers compared frog populations in forest and suburban zones in Connecticut—and found that frogs in suburban areas [with lawns] had twice the ratio of females to males compared with frogs in the forested areas. There's speculation, that for some unknown reason, something is shifting sex ratios and feminizing male frogs.

We think the researchers (for fear of being perceived as male chauvinists or not being politically correct) may be missing the obvious:

- **Female frogs prefer well-manicured lawns.**
- **Male frogs prefer roughing it in the forest.**

- Jim Novak

If you want to read the entire story go to:

<http://www.motherjones.com/tom-philpott/2015/09/your-lawn-giving-frogs-sex-change>

Sign Up & Save on all your printing needs with the TPI FedEx Office discount. Turfgrass Producers International and FedEx Office announce a member discount agreement that's sure to be a big benefit for you and your business. Membership in TPI provides you FedEx Office quality and expertise for the business services you use most. TPI special rates apply to a wide range of printing services and products, including:

Lawn Signs, Flyers, Signs/Banners, Pamphlets, Business Proposals and much more!

Go to the TPI website at <http://www.turfgrasssod.org/> and click on the "For Members" tab and the link —Member Benefits and Programs.



Deep South Turf Expo chalks up positive reviews!

By all accounts The Deep South Turf Expo (DSTE) was a success. Organizers reported nearly 700 people were in attendance and their education program earned rave reviews.

DSTE expressed their thanks to their education committee, including Dr. Scott McElroy, Associate Professor in the Department of Agronomy and Soils at Auburn University, Dr. Jay McCurdy*, Assistant Professor, Turfgrass Extension Specialist at Mississippi State University and Dr. Bryan Unruh, Professor of Environmental Horticulture and Associate Center Director at the University of Florida for the foresight and planning they put into the program. Breakout sessions included Professional Development, Professional Pesticide Usage and Safety, Soil and Water Management, Golf Turf, Sports Turf and Lawn and Landscape Education.

Virginia Tech Extension Turfgrass Specialist, Dr. Mike Goatley, was the keynote speaker and presented a "standing room only" presentation, "*First and Foremost - Be an Agronomist.*"

In addition to the outstanding education from guest speakers all over the southeast, each of the parent organizations, Alabama Turfgrass Association, Mississippi Turfgrass Association, Alabama Golf Course Superintendents Association, Gulf Coast Golf Course

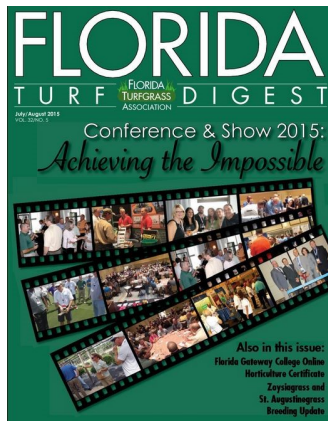
Superintendents Association and the Louisiana-Mississippi Golf Course Superintendents Association conducted their annual business meetings where new officers were elected and installed.

The Deep South Turf Expo tradeshow filled the exhibit hall and gave companies that provide services specifically for the turfgrass industry an opportunity to feature their products and services.

Go to www.DeepSouthTurfExpo.org for information about DSTE's plans for upcoming events!

* NOTE:

Dr. Jay McCurdy will be presenting at TPI's 2016 International Conference on Thursday, February 25th addressing "*Weed Control—New Herbicides and the Future of Sod Production*" sponsored by Mississippi State University. As a university student, Dr. McCurdy was once the recipient of the Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarship from The Lawn Institute.



Turf Benefits

<http://www.mirabelsmagazinecentral.com/DigitalEdition/index.html?id=122b9f19-5659-4cbb-a056-cab5c1322ec9>

Our thanks to Florida Turf Digest for featuring The Lawn Institute's "*Fun Facts about Natural Grass Lawns*" in the Turf Benefits section of their July/August issue. We appreciate any exposure that helps to get the positive virtues of turfgrass to as broad an audience as possible.





In March 2015, North Carolina State University conducted a survey to examine inventory and pricing of North Carolina sod. Dr. Grady Miller, Professor Crop Science and author of the report suggested North Carolina State University and A&T State University intend to conduct similar surveys annually to determine and track relative inventory levels and project price changes for the year.

The survey results (a portion of which are highlighted here), reported on inventory levels, pricing, extent of certified grass grown, cost of freight, fuel surcharges, sales by industry segment (landscape contractors, homeowners, golf courses, sports/athletics, brokers and retail garden centers) and total acreage in production.

The following is just a small portion of the survey findings.

- Supply of bermudagrass is low, even with larger growers.
- The price of bermudagrass and zoysiagrass is most likely to increase.
- Growers are currently adding acreage.
- The primary markets for North Carolina sod producers are landscape contractors.

North Carolina Sod Producers Association (NCSPA) records suggest the twenty completed surveys represent about half the sod farms in North Carolina.

Through the survey NCSU obtained estimates of the inventory for bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, centipedegrass, tall fescue, St. Augustinegrass, and Kentucky bluegrass based on estimated sales and the availability of sod as excellent (more than 10% of demand), adequate (equal to demand), or poor (more than 10% shortage).

Pricing information included the farm price and the price for truckload orders delivered to the closest urban market or within 100 miles of the farms. All costs were reported as price per square foot of sod.

Bermudagrass was being grown by 15 (75%) of the surveyed producers. Only 7% of these producers rated their inventory as adequate; none indicated it was excellent. For 2015, 93% of all bermudagrass producers projected having less than adequate supplies. No growers with greater than 800 acres expected an adequate supply of bermudagrass.

Zoysiagrass was being grown by 16 (80%) of the surveyed producers. Sixty-three percent of these producers rated their inventory as adequate to excellent. For 2015, 37% of all



Turf Mountain Sod—Hendersonville, North Carolina

zoysiagrass producers projected having shortages. Only one grower, with greater than 800 total sod acres, projected low inventory.

Of the producers surveyed, 14 (70%) are growing centipedegrass. Seventy-one percent of these growers reported they had adequate to excellent inventory. Twenty-nine percent of all centipedegrass growers anticipated a shortage during 2015.

Of the producers surveyed, eight (40%) were growing tall fescue. Seventy-five percent of these growers reported they had adequate to excellent inventory. Twenty-five percent of all tall fescue growers anticipated a shortage during 2015.

Of the producers surveyed, 10 (50%) are growing St. Augustinegrass. Fifty percent of these growers reported they had adequate to excellent inventory and fifty percent anticipated a shortage during 2015.

Only five of the producers surveyed (25%) reported growing Kentucky bluegrass. Based on NCSPA grower data, these growers (with perhaps an exception of one or two growers) are producing a sod comprised of a Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue mixture, not a 100% pure Kentucky bluegrass sod. Of the group that responded to this survey, 60% anticipated an insufficient inventory of the grass during 2015.

Of the survey respondents, only 5% indicated they reduced sod production acres during 2014 (20% average reduction). It was not known whether this reduction was due to acres being taken out of turfgrass production and converted to other crops or left fallow or whether land was sold. The same percentage of respondents indicated they would have a reduction in 2015, with the average reduction of only 2%. While a few reported reductions, 75% indicated they had increased acres during the last three years. The average percentage increase was 14%.

Dr. Miller's full report can be viewed at:
<http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/2015-sod-producers-report-for-north-carolina/>

**Where in the world is TPI represented?
EVERYWHERE!**

An ongoing series featuring photos and copy from TPI member websites and their social media pages.

**Turf Lawn Sales
Maynooth Co., Kildare
Ireland**

WEBSITE: <http://www.turflawnsales.com/>
FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/Turf-Lawn-Sales-153160894701371/>



Turf Lawn Sales is a 55 acre farm, only 25 minutes from Dublin, Ireland. Owner Aidan Burke and his wife Hilary take pride in knowing they can provide same day delivery service to the greater Dublin area and most of their customers outside of Dublin receive their order by the next day.

Turf Lawn Sales started growing lawn turf in 1998 with just a few acres of land, since then their facilities have grown rapidly due to the demand.

In the years since they started, they have invested heavily in modern specialized machinery to help produce quality turf for their customers. By 2005 they had expanded their turf nursery to 55 acres.

Their turf is cultivated from a number 2 lawn seed containing a mix of dwarf ryegrass, slender creeping red fescue and brown top bent. They have developed this mix so that it is a perfect blend of grasses for domestic lawns.

Along with their turf they supply a range of garden products. They offer quality products such as Instant Roll Out Lawn Turf, blends of top soil, bark mulch, compost, peat moss, decorative stones, sand, gravel and many other landscaping materials.

The Burkes are committed to supplying quality lawn turf at a very affordable price to their customers.



Aidan and Hilary Burke with their beautiful family.



Top photo: The Taghadoe Round Tower and Church dating back to the 11th or 12th Century can be seen from Turf Lawn Sales.

Bottom photo: Aerial view of Turf Lawn Sales.



**A Proud Member of
Turfgrass Producers International
Since 2010**

“DOWN ON THE FARM” with Randy & Hilda Jasperson Jasperson Sod Farm—Franksville, Wisconsin



Geri Hannah, Randy and Hilda Jasperson, Melanie Stanton and Anne Footle.

Thanks to the hospitality of Randy and Hilda Jasperson of Jasperson Sod Farm in Franksville, Wisconsin the entire TPI staff had a personal behind the scenes tour of their turfgrass operation.

What began as a two acre farm in 1959 that only grew the then popular Merion Bluegrass has since grown to over 1200 acres of turfgrass sod production. They now grow several types of bluegrass including Kentucky bluegrass, Barenbrug International’s HGT bluegrass, and Sod Solutions’ Bella Bluegrass. They harvest both standard small rolls as well as big rolls and provide sod for home lawns, sports fields and golf courses.

How does Randy pass the time when he’s not busy overseeing his turfgrass operation? In addition to serving on the TPI board he also enjoys restoring antique cars of which he has an impressive collection.



To learn more about Jasperson Sod Farm be sure to see Randy’s “Show & Tell” presentation at the upcoming 2016 TPI International Education Conference & Field Day in Houston, Feb 22-25, 2016.

Montage of Jasperson Sod Farm during visit by TPI staff. During the tour the Jasperson’s were harvesting Sod Solutions’ Bella Bluegrass, the world’s first, dwarf vegetative bluegrass

Photos by Jim Novak

The pendulum can swing two ways when it comes to turfgrass regulations . . . and sometimes they're both in the WRONG DIRECTION.

Commentary – Jim Novak



When any governing body wants to ban lawns entirely based on misinformation, pressure from outside interests, or as a way of coming up with a perceived quick fix solution to a given situation, I find it troubling. I have been quick to come to the defense of turfgrass and lawns because of all the environmental benefits natural grass has to offer.

Oftentimes restrictions on lawns are a reflex reaction to circumstances that, like the weather, can change over a short period of time. But once regulations are set in motion and become “the law of the land,” reversing those decisions can take time, especially in light of local, state or federal bureaucratic infighting, indecision or personal gain in one way or another.

Laws that restrict turfgrass areas without any rational reasoning, or without consulting turfgrass specialists, or without reviewing scientific research before being passed are a disservice to the public. Just as troubling is not taking into account the many benefits turfgrass provides to our environment or the possible long term environmental consequences of hastily made decisions to eliminate lawns, or limit them.

Those of us in the turfgrass and green industry business know the benefits of natural grass all too well and collectively we have a day-to-day challenge of educating the public on water conservation, the availability of new grass varieties, the proper use of fertilizers, promoting best management practices, etc., All of which would prevent or eliminate many such laws or regulations from ever being passed in the first place.

Just as disturbing, from an objective point of view, would be any ordinance or law that would swing the pendulum to the other extreme and require that homeowners must have a lawn.

Consider for example The City of St. Peters, in St. Charles County, Missouri . They have an ordinance that requires that a “minimum” of 50 percent of all yard areas be comprised of turfgrass.

The ruling: Chapter 405 Zoning & Subdivision Regulations - Section 405.390 Landscaping & Screening A-4 states in part:

“All landscaping shall be properly maintained according to City ordinances presently in effect. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of all yard areas shall be comprised of turfgrass.”

The Freedom Center of Missouri has challenged the constitutionality of this law on behalf of one family. The wife suffers from a severe allergy to grass pollen and the family had requested an exemption from the ruling for health reasons. Her request for an exemption was dismissed by a trial court.

It's not as if this family has neglected landscaping, quite the contrary; several years ago they removed all the grass from their yard and began converting it into a large, well-tended flower garden that includes a landscaped hillside and flowers blooming from multiple mulched planting areas that are interspersed with walkways, sitting areas, and small ponds. For the wife who suffers from the allergy it was a relief to have limited exposure to grass pollen.

The Freedom Center argues the city's turfgrass mandate violates both the U.S. Constitution and the Missouri Constitution. Dave Roland, its director of litigation, said he was “not aware of any court in the entire country that has allowed a city to force its citizens involuntarily to grow government-dictated plants in government-dictated locations around the citizens' homes. The city is unconstitutionally assuming authority to make decisions that properly belong to the homeowners, and we intend to nip it in the bud.”

This month the Missouri Court of Appeals is scheduled to hear arguments suggesting the trial court should not have dismissed the case. Let's hope that the appeals court demonstrates some rational judgement and passes a judgement in favor of the family.

The banning of lawns and/or making a lawn a required percentage of the overall landscape are both extreme measures. No one is suggesting the appeals court needs to have the Wisdom of Solomon in making the right decision. We're just hoping they try to be a little smarter than a 5th grader before passing judgement.

###

TOGETHER WE GROW STRONGER

**Grow your business—
become a member of TPI.**

The turfgrass industry is constantly changing, from new innovations in equipment that maximize production and reduce labor costs, to new varieties of turfgrasses that are more drought tolerant, offer greater resistance to disease and require less irrigation. Keeping abreast of these opportunities along with ongoing research and legislative issues is no easy task. Perhaps that's why a growing number of turfgrass producers worldwide realize that if they want to stay up-to-date with changes in the industry, learn what's new in the marketplace, and have unlimited networking possibilities with their peers, there's one association they can turn to - **Turfgrass Producers International.**

TPI is a trade association serving individuals and businesses engaged in the research, growing, harvesting, and marketing of turfgrass sod and related products. TPI is dedicated to providing our members with the tools, resources, education and networking opportunities that will keep them informed about new research, product innovations, improved practices, and environmental issues that will enhance their knowledge and help them maximize potential business opportunities.

The scope of TPI's commitment is all inclusive:

- Advance the turfgrass sod industry worldwide through the promotion of improved practices, the professional development of our members and enhancement of the environment.
- Promote the general welfare of the turfgrass sod industry.
- Encourage adherence to high business standards and practices.
- Educate consumers, key decision makers and government legislators and agencies about the environmental benefits of natural grass.
- Represent our members before government and public/private organizations whose activities may have an impact on our industry.

TPI is launching a new Membership Campaign and we encourage all members to promote our great organization to potential members. TPI represents: Purpose, Expertise, Support, Education and Commitment.

Go to www.TurfGrassSod.org and click on the *Become a Member* tab or wherever you see the **Together We Grow Stronger** logo for more information on how you can help TPI GROW STRONGER.

- Serve as an advocate for our members and the industry.
- Build awareness and ensure that accurate information about the environmental, social, economic and health benefits of turfgrass is communicated effectively.
- Collaborate with other green industry associations, organizations and related businesses in developing standards that will benefit our industry.
- Work closely with TPI member Working Groups, Committees and Task Forces as a means of obtaining insightful input, valid recommendations and creative ideas from the membership.
- Through education and research, encourage the improvement of lawns and sports turf.
- TPI's foundation, The Lawn Institute, funds turfgrass research and education and serves to disseminate information about proper lawn care and related turfgrass sciences to homeowners, educators, green industry professionals, the media, students, etc.

TPI provides you with an opportunity to:

- Network with fellow turfgrass producers worldwide.
- Have unparalleled access to industry information.
- Save money on many business services.
- Promote your business with a wide variety of sales and marketing tools.
- AND MUCH MORE!



Turfgrass Producers International

2 East Main Street
East Dundee, IL 60118
Phone: +847-649-5555
www.TurfGrassSod.org





Season Greetings

During this special time of the year family and friends come together to celebrate the season and fondly recall memories of holidays past, share stories, give thanks, show generosity to others and extend greetings of joy to those we hold most dear.

Wherever your travels may take you during the holidays, Turfgrass Producers International extends warm wishes to you and yours for a joyful holiday season and best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year.

The TPI Board of Trustees and staff

BREAKING NEWS

Tom Delaney Will Be Leaving the National Association of Landscape Professionals

"It has been a privilege to serve the companies and men and women of the landscape industry." - Tom Delaney - National Association of Landscape Professionals

After nearly 30 years of dedicated service to the landscape industry, Tom Delaney will be leaving his position as director of government affairs for the National Association of Landscape Professionals (formerly PLANET). Delaney will remain with NALP over the next few months to help ensure a smooth transition for the organization's public policy work.

In announcing the change, Sabeena Hickman, NALP's chief executive officer stated, "I know the industry joins me in thanking Tom for his many years of service to NALP and the industry as a whole. Tom has overseen a vast array of complex issues for the association at federal, state, and local levels. Each and every company in the industry, members and non-members, have benefitted from Tom's legislative and regulatory work, whether they know it or not."

"It has been a bittersweet decision to leave NALP," Delaney noted. "As NALP expands its commitment to relentless advocacy, the organization will be increasingly active in initiatives in the Washington, DC area. I am proud of the work I have done for the organizations I have served. It has been a privilege to serve the companies and the men and women of the landscape industry."

Delaney's relationship with the industry started in 1974 when he began working as a pesticide regulator for the Georgia Department of Agriculture. He then worked for the Profes-

sional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) for fifteen years, four of which were spent as that organization's Executive Vice President. The majority of his career has been focused on government affairs, both supporting individual members with their unique challenges and issues as well as representing the needs of the entire industry to policy makers across the country.

Over the years, his dedication and efforts have been acknowledged numerous times; he was the recipient of the Landscape Management's Lawn Care Industry Person of the Year Award (1994) and received the industry's Leadership Award sponsored by Lawn & Landscape magazine and Bayer Environmental Science (2002).

Jim Novak, TPI's Public Relations Manager stated, "Over the years Tom had partnered with TPI many times in helping to provide a voice on important issues. His dedication, commitment and tireless efforts have always been greatly appreciated. All of us at TPI wish him the best as he looks to the future and considers other opportunities."



The TPI 2016 Media Kit is now available

Maximize Your Advertising Impact

TPI offers a wide variety of ways to reach your target audience and deliver your message persuasively.

Today more than ever, it is critical to get the most out of every advertising dollar you spend and TPI is making it easier for you to reach your customers by providing new and value-added opportunities in TPI digital and print media. These opportunities are detailed in the 2016 Media Kit. Highlights include:

- Free TPI website leaderboard ad with paid advertising in all six issues of *Turf News*.
- TPI website redesign includes optimization for all mobile devices.
- *Turf News* goes digital! TPI members will have the magazine available in print and digital formats.
- Completed *Turf News* signed insertion orders Received by December 31, 2015 receive an additional 2% off the gross ad rate.
- Additional advertising opportunities available in the TPI E-Newsletter.
- Greater visibility through Twitter sponsorships.

TPI 2016 Media Kit

PRINT
SOCIAL MEDIA

Digital

Sponsorship Opportunities

Mobile Devices

Classified Ads

TURF NEWS

TPI Membership Directory

E-Newsletter

ACT NOW!

Artwork for the 2016 January/February issue of *Turf News* is due **December 8**.

Access the Media Kit [here](#) or contact Anne Footle afootle@turfgrassod.org or 847-649-5555, ext. 102.

Look what's new!

Turf News
IS NOW
DIGITAL

TPI members will be pleased to learn that beginning with the November/December 2015 issue, *Turf News* magazine is available in both print and digital formats.

By now, all subscribers should have received an email providing them with a link to access a digital version of the magazine. If you are a *Turf News* subscriber and did not receive an email notification, please contact the TPI office at (847-649-5555) for the link.

**TPI members have the benefit of receiving
Turf News both in print and digital formats.
Now you can take *Turf News* with you wherever you go!**

TPI members can access the magazine at www.TurfGrassSod.org—Members Only Tab

Turf News – now available in PRINT & DIGITAL formats

