

TURFGRASS PRODUCERS INTERNATIONAL

January/February E-Newsletter

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Michigan Sod Growers
East Lansing, MI 3/12

Minnesota Sod Growers
Ham Lake, MN 3/28

April

Capitol Hill, Legislative Day
Washington, D.C. 4/1-5

Turfgrass Producers of Florida
Okeechobee, FL 4/25-26

June

Breakfast on the Farm
Union Grove, WI 6/22

July

TPI Summer Convention &
Field Day
Minneapolis, MN 7/23-25



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE | THE WESTIN CHARLOTTE
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
FEBRUARY 18-20, 2019

TPI 2019 International Education Conference RECAP!!



TPI 2019 Conference Recap!

By - Karen Cooper



TPI's 2019 International Education Conference roared into Charlotte, North Carolina February 18-20 when more than 450 TPI members from nine countries and 36 states came together for an exciting week of learning, networking, and meeting new friends.

The event started early on Monday as more than 150 people traveled to Charlotte Motor Speedway, Hendricks Motor Sports, Bank of America Stadium (home of the NFL's Carolina Panthers), and BB&T Ballpark (home of the Triple A Charlotte Knights). A special highlight of the day was when attendees were rode in vans around the track at Charlotte Motor Speedway at speeds exceeding 80mph. Attendees learned about the myriad events held at the Speedway over the course of the year, ranging from stock car races to drag races to STEM classes for middle school students. At Hendricks, the group



saw a number of track-driven cars from the various Hendricks drivers as well as some of the shop areas. A frequent comment from the large number of TPI members watching the shop area how the large, well-lit, climate-controlled area looked like a dream! The stadium and ballpark tours were full of insider information about game day preparations and field maintenance for high traffic areas!

Later that evening, TPI president Eric Heuver welcomed a full house to the President's Reception in the Providence Ballroom. The energy in the room was deafening and set an exciting tone for the week as the crowd spilled into ballroom lobby areas into the evening.





Education

The 2019 Education Conference kicked off with a theme of change as keynote speaker Shawn Rhodes of Shosin Consulting opened the conference with his talk entitled *Creating A Pivot Point: Leveraging Change Without Sacrificing Results*. This session was followed by breakout sessions focusing a number of business and agronomic topics including technology on the farm, sod shelf life, TPI's new PR initiative (#keepitreal), natural grass water needs, lessons learned in the industry, managing change, and turfgrass marketing and pricing information. Speakers included TPI's Executive Director Dr. Casey Reynolds; a member panel of Tom Diveley (Harmony Outdoor Brands), Laurie Griffen (Saratoga Sod Farm, Inc.), and Ryan Menken (Jasperson Sod Farm); a second member panel of Bobby Winstead (Winstead Turf Farms), Fred Pittillo (Turf Mountain Sod), Merett Alexander (NG Turf), and Joe Wilkins (Green Valley Turf Co.); as well as several university researchers, including Ben Campbell, PhD (University of Georgia); Doug Karcher, PhD (University of Arkansas), John Stier, PhD (University of Tennessee), Jay McCurdy, PhD (Mississippi State University); and Roch Gaussoin, PhD (University of Nebraska).





Phil Davis, the founder and president of Tungsten Branding kicked off Wednesday's education slate with his talk about branding entitled *The Grass Is Always Greener... Until It Isn't: The Changing Perceptions of Public Opinion*. The day's breakout sessions included topics such as innovative farm management (Diane and Greg Mischel of DeBucks Sod Farm, Inc.); plant and soil interactions (Adam Thoms, PhD, and Nick Christians, PhD, Iowa State University); as well as updates on TPI's government relations initiatives from Dr. Casey Reynolds; and repeats of some of Tuesday's sessions.

Annual Business Meeting

TPI Officers and Staff led the 2019 TPI Annual Business Meeting where they presented information on TPI and TLI budgets, TLI scholarships, current and new initiatives, and more. TPI Executive Director Casey Reynolds, PhD spoke about TPI's current and future endeavors in attending and speaking at turfgrass events throughout the world, TPI's involvement in regulatory affairs, developing new benefits for TPI members, new supplier categories, and a new TPI website that will be launching in 2019.



TPI Vice-President Hank Kerfoot presented two Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarships to deserving recipients Sara Lechluder and Krysta Bouchard. He also provided updates on a new public relations initiative that was launched in 2019 and will include consumer and market research on natural grass as well as new TPI resources that will allow members to promote their use. "We're excited about getting this underway and promoting the use of natural grasses while also putting more resources in the hands of TPI members", says Casey Reynolds, PhD.



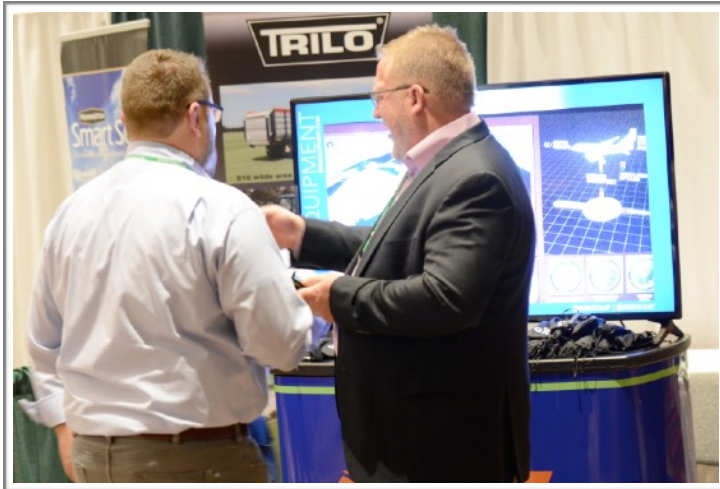
Inspirational Breakfast

TPI Past President Bob Weerts was the featured speaker at Wednesday's Inspirational Breakfast as he shared his intensely moving story of faith and loss and how TPI members form a family for all of us. The morning allowed all in attendance to reflect upon their own blessings with a reminder from Bob to not take anyone for granted and to let people in your life know how much you love and appreciate them.

Exhibit Hall

The Exhibit Hall opened with a tremendous crowd ready to visit with the 59 exhibitors and event sponsors lining the hall. The energy was high in the action-packed aisles for more than two hours on Tuesday evening and again on Wednesday afternoon as vendors were able to share information about their products with the attendees. TPI is fortunate to have so many supportive vendors and sponsors that make our events possible!





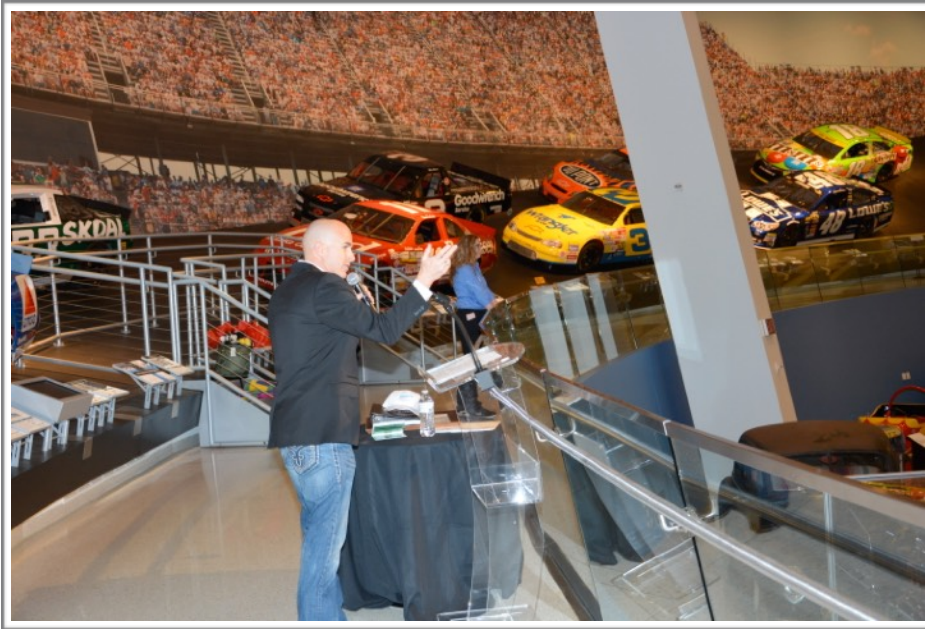
TPI President Eric Heuver visits with vendors during the first of two Trade Shows at TPI 2019 in Charlotte.

Show and Tell

New board members John Keleher (Australian Lawn Concepts), Bob McCurdy (McCurdy Sod Farms), and Aaron McWhorter (NG Turf) wrapped up the conference in Charlotte by sharing their farms with members at the always-popular Show and Tell Sessions. These sessions are always popular for attendees because it provides an opportunity to hear about the successes of other operations, as well as the challenges and the solutions to them. Thanks to John, Bob, and Aaron for sharing their stories.



TPI Members Race into the NASCAR Hall of Fame to Support TLI!



More than 300 conference attendees rounded out the week with a banquet and fundraising auction for The Lawn Institute at the NASCAR Hall of Fame. The evening kicked off with the much anticipated raffle drawing for the 1975 Corvette Convertible donated by Brian Bouchard of Kingston Turf.

Richard Vaccaro of Clarksville Sod Farms, Inc. in New Jersey was the lucky winner! Congratulations Richard and thanks to everyone who bought tickets in support of TLI. Thanks especially to Brian Bouchard for the generous donation!

Brian Bouchard of Kingston Turf congratulates Richard Vaccaro of Clarksville Sod Farms on his winning ticket!





TLI Auction Items, Donors, and Winners

Auction Item	Donor	Winner
NASCAR Fun Pack	The Lawn Institute	Linda Moyer
Handmade quilt w/ kids' books	Karen Cooper, TPI Assoc. Executive Director	Bob Weerts
Disney Basket	Keith Wittig of Central Turf Farms, Inc.	Will Nugent
Handmade Duck Call	Jamie Spears of Inman Mills Farm	Jim Keeven
TPI 2020 Conference & Field Day Package & Dinner	TPI	Dan Huggett
R&R Parts Package	Tom Rogers on behalf of R & R Products	Tom Halter
Steak and Wine Package	Hilltop Herefords, Drs. Doug Karcher, Mike Richardson, and John Sorochan	Will Nugent
Weekend of Relaxing at Texas Lodge	Chance Stone of Texas Sod Leasing	Jim Keeven
Handmade Duck Call	Jamie Spears of Inman Mills Farm	Mark Tribbett
Green Egg Grilling Package	Jason Nugent on behalf of Harmony Brands	Steve Griffen
Lodging and Paragliding trip in Australia	John Keleher of Australian Lawn Concepts	Linda Bradley
Brouwer Turf Roller Model BTR30	Gerry Brouwer on behalf of Brouwer Kesmac	Claus Zander
Remington Model 870 Shotgun	The Lawn Institute	Randy Jasperson
American Red Snapper Fishing Trip, Gulf of Mexico	Will Nugent of Bethel Farms	Randy Jasperson
Dinner for 8 with Your Own Private Chef	Hank and Mary Kerfoot of Modern Turf	Will Nugent
Season-long Agricultural Treatment for 100 acres	David Bradley on behalf of Locus Agricultural Solutions	Keith Wittig
Four Day Seed Production Visit	Ed Lee on behalf of Summit Seed	Steve Griffen



TLI Raffle & Auction Items (continued)

The auction wrapped up with the auctioning of a custom-designed Magnum installer with a Richard Petty paint scheme, courtesy of Magnum. The installer has found a happy home with TPI member Chad Price of Carolina Green!

After the auction, attendees were able to enjoy all the exhibits and hands-on activities in the Hall of Fame! Thanks to all attendees, exhibitors, and sponsors for a great event!





Thanks to all of our TPI 2019 International Education Conference Sponsors!

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THE LAWN INSTITUTE





Survey reveals nice lawns improve property values by up to \$100K

A real estate agent weighs in - *by Laura Barry*

A national survey conducted by real estate agents [Raine & Horne](#) has discovered that a neat, tidy and lush green lawn attracts buyers to a house. The agents revealed that the phenomena occurred so often, that 93% of Raine & Horne real estate agents actually recommend their clients improve their lawns before selling their house.

Of the real estate agents surveyed, 40% of agents believe a nicely presented lawn can boost your home's value by 20%, while 23.3% of agents surveyed believed it could bolster your homes value by 30%. Given that the median price of an Australian dwelling is currently sitting at \$550,610 – [according to CoreLogic](#) – 20% works out to be roughly \$110,000. “The market has cooled over the past 15 months and people are nervous about getting a good price for their home. In these uncertain times, anything homeowners can do to get peace of mind by adding value to their home is a win, and first impressions count,” said Peter Diamantidis from Raine & Horne St Marys.

“It’s important to look for improvements you can make to your home that are cost effective and deliver a good return. Adding lawn is a no-brainer, it’s a quick and easy renovation that adds value and most importantly attracts more buyers. The survey also revealed a lawn was the most popular surface for family buyers (first choice for 63%), over decking (21%), synthetic turf (7%), paving (5% and concrete (3%).

“Lawns were the most popular surface for family buyers (63%) over decking (21%), synthetic turf (7%), paving and concrete.”

Rugby League personality and Fox Sports Presenter Nathan Hindmarsh and his wife, professional renovator and interior designer, Bonnie Hindmarsh, have recently built their dream home for their family of four boys and two dogs, where lawn is now a key feature. “Having a nice lawn was important to us for many reasons – it looks gorgeous, it’s the perfect surface for our family and it helped add value to our home,” said Bonnie.

According to real estate agents, the main attraction of a lawn for buyers was the improved look and feel of the property (89%), added lifestyle and relaxation appeal (45%) and a safe playing area for the kids (42%).



MEET THE NEW STMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January 29, 2019



The STMA announced its 2019 Board of Directors during the 30th annual Conference and Exhibition held in Phoenix, AZ last week. The 13-member board officially took office January 24 at the Annual Meeting. The Executive Board is comprised of five officers. Elected to the Presidency is **Jody Gill, CSFM**, from Blue Valley School District in Overland Park, KS. Ascending to Immediate Past President is **Sarah Martin, CSFM**, City of Phoenix Parks and Rec. **Jimmy Simpson, CSFM**, Town of Cary, NC fills the President-Elect office and Secretary / Treasurer is **Nick McKenna, CSFM**, Texas A&M Athletics, College Station, TX. Serving a second term as the Commercial Vice President is **Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, CSE**, The Toro Company, Minneapolis.

The STMA Bylaws require that the Board have Directors from each segment of its voting members. Directors elected include:

- Stephen Lord, CSFM**, Cincinnati Reds, representing facilities used by Professional Athletes
- Jeremy Bohonko**, Ewing, N. Charlotte, NC, Commercial Director
- Clark Cox, CSFM**, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, At Large Elected Director.

Returning for their second year of a 2-year term are Director for Parks and Rec **James Bergdoll, CSFM**, City of Chattanooga (TN) Public Works, and **Jason Kruse, PhD**, Academic Director, University of Florida, Gainesville. Three open positions were filled by appointment of the President. Gill appointed **Sun Roesslein, CSFM**, North Area Athletic Complex, Golden, CO to the Appointed At-Large Director. Roesslein served on the Board in 2017 and 2018 as K-12 Director. He also appointed **Joshua Koss, CSFM**, University of San Diego, as the Director for Higher Education, and **Jeremy Driscoll**, St. Mark's High School, Wilmington, DE representing K-12.

The Board's official first meeting will be March 22-23.

KIKO AUCTION Absolute auction, all sells to the highest bidders on location: **Friday - March 22, 2019 - 10:00 AM**
 14349 Burton City Rd., Orrville, OH 44667



Retirement Auction - Medina Sod Farm
 293 Acres - Full Line Of Sod Equipment
 Tractors - Trucks - Excavating Equipment - Shop Equipment
 View www.kikoauctions.com or call 330-455-9357 for more details.
 Auctioneers/Realtors: Peter R. Kiko Sr., Lennie Milano, Lori Kiko, Doug Milano





TPI Seeks Input from Southern US Producers on MSMA Re-Registration

Drexel Chemical and Luxembourg-Pamol, the two registrants of MSMA, comprise the membership of the Organic Arsenical Products Task Force (OAPTF). This Task Force is planning to submit an application to the EPA Office of Pesticide Programs in early 2019 under the Pesticide Review Improvement Act (PRIA) to make the conditional turf uses of MSMA permanent and to restore some of the turf uses canceled in 2009.

Currently, the MSMA label permits two broadcast applications per season for sod production and prohibits MSMA applications in Florida. The Task Force would like to better understand the needs of sod producers prior to submitting the PRIA application to make sure their voices are heard throughout this process in their pursuit to make permanent the conditional uses of MSMA in sod production.

Questions to Turfgrass Producers

Are the currently labeled two broadcast applications per season adequate?

Do Florida sod producers want or need MSMA re-registered in Florida?

Are there other changes or additions to the use of MSMA needed in sod production that are currently lacking?

TPI will be working with the OAPTF to construct comments for submission and are seeking turfgrass producers who are willing to participate in this process. Please contact Dr. Casey Reynolds, Executive Director of TPI at creynolds@Turfgrassod.org or (847) 737-1846 to provide any comments and / or to submit letters of support.



“Are 2 broadcasts applications/year adequate?”

“Do Florida sod producers need MSMA re-registered?”

“We want to hear from you!”



TPI Launches #KeepItREAL Campaign in Print and Social Media

Be on the lookout for our KeepItReal hashtag on Social Media and new SWAG that we'll be handing out at field days and shows. TPI is encouraging people to Keep It Real with natural grass in 2019 and beyond! TPI Members can log into the Member's Only Toolkit and download all of our KeepItReal graphics for their own use on printing, social media, and more. Stickers, koozies, and other SWAG will also be available for download and/or purchase when TPI launches a new website this summer, so stay tuned!





TPI is traveling the U.S. speaking with Turfgrass Producers about new Trucking Regulations Impacting Sod Haulers

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) have rolled out a new mandate on Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs) for U.S commercial trucking operators. Dr. Casey Reynolds, TPI's Executive Director has presented this information to turfgrass producers in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, New Jersey, Michigan, Texas, and will be traveling to Minnesota in late-March. As with any new federal trucking law, enforcement questions have arisen at the state level which is one of the reasons the DOT is phasing this new rule in on a 3-year implementation timeline. TPI met with FMCSA official in Washington, D.C. last fall to discuss how this new mandate impacts sod haulers.



This information was presented in the January / February issue of Turf News to keep TPI members up-to-date on the latest information. If you have questions about how this new ELD mandate impacts sod haulers in your state, please contact Dr. Casey Reynolds at creynolds@TurfgrassSod.org and TPI will be happy to work with you on this issue.

ELD Rule Implementation Timeline





Plans are Moving Forward for TPI's 2019 Summer Convention & Field Day

TPI is heading to Minnesota July 23-25 for the 2019 Summer Convention & Field Day. The week will include several exciting industry tours, including the University of Minnesota Turfgrass Research Facility, Toro Manufacturing, and the Minnesota Vikings natural grass practice facility. Wagner Sod will host the field day on Thursday, July 25. Registration will open in late April. Check out www.turfgrassod.org for updates!

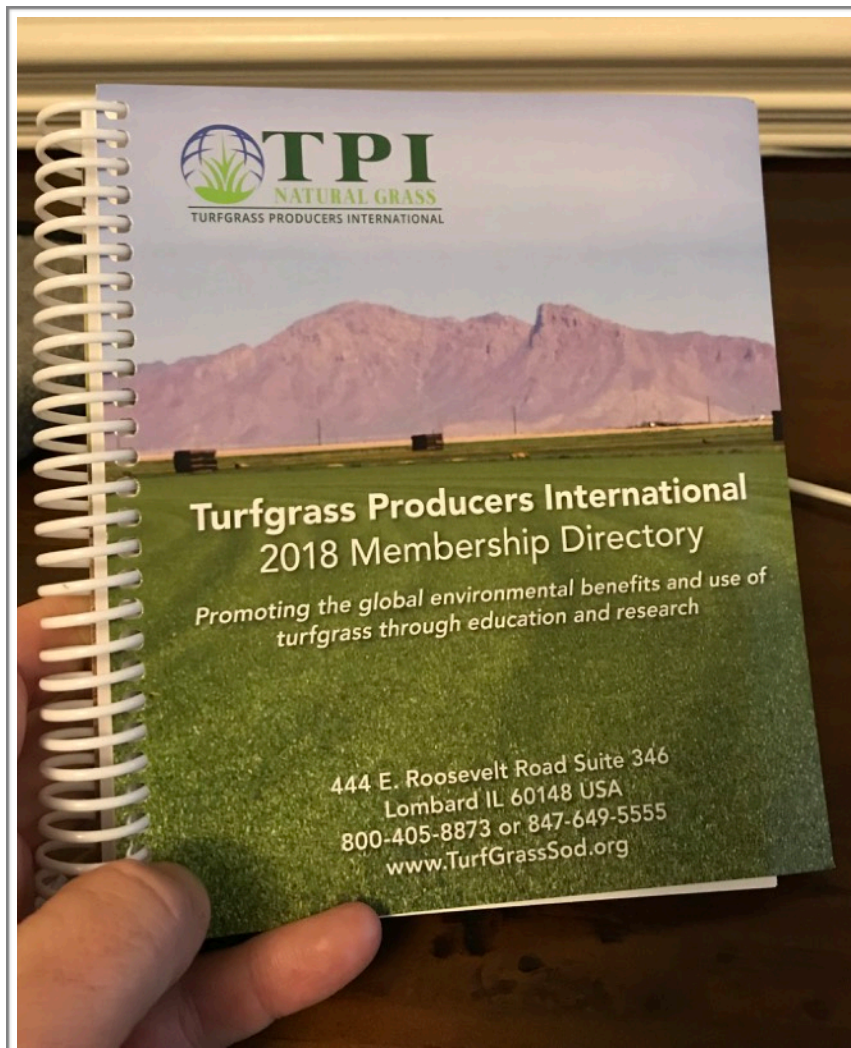
Exhibitor registration is open NOW at <http://www.turfgrassod.org/pages/summer-program/>





Renew or Join SOON to be included in the 2019 TPI Membership Directory!

The 2019 TPI Membership Directory is under construction and will be mailed later this spring. If you have not already renewed your membership for 2019, be sure to renew today in order to ensure your listing is included! TPI's membership directory is packed full of over 200 pages of turfgrass supplier, producer, industry, and educator information! Not a TPI member? Contact us today to join, we'd love to have you on our team!





2019 TPI Member Benefits Brochure!



TPI membership can cost as little as 3-4 pallets of sod for a small farm and 5-10 pallets of sod for a larger farm.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

USA and Canada

- A-1 (1-99 acres): \$500
- A-2 (100-299 acres): \$750
- A-3 (300+ acres): \$1250
- A-NEW*: \$250

International

- A-Int: \$500 (all farm sizes)
- A-NEW*: \$250

Suppliers

- B-Supplier: \$995

* Members new to TPI or have not been a TPI member in the previous 5 years qualify for a one-year introductory rate of \$250.

DON'T DELAY...

ACCESSING OUR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION IS EASY!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.TurfGrassSod.org

SCAN OUR QR CODE: QUESTIONS? CONTACT US:



Karen Cooper,
Associate Executive Director
847-737-7631
kcooper@TurfGrassSod.org

NEW!
2019 TPI Member Benefits Brochure
Call or email us today for your copy!

[**kcooper@TurfgrassSod.org**](mailto:kcooper@TurfgrassSod.org)



Stay up-to-date with the latest in Turfgrass Production by checking out the current issue of **Turf News**, the only magazine devoted **exclusively** to turfgrass production!

Not a member of TPI and interested in joining? We'd love to have you on our team!

Please visit www.TurfgrassSod.org or contact us at any of the information below!



Contact Information

Turfgrass Producers International
444 E. Roosevelt Road, Suite 346
Lombard, IL 60148
info@TurfgrassSod.org
Toll Free: 800-405-8873
Phone: 847-649-5555
www.TurfgrassSod.org

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@TPITurTalk



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Please email any comments or suggestions for future E-newsletters to Casey Reynolds.

creynolds@TurfgrassSod.org