I am always amazed and intrigued at the amount of products out there that come with big claims in terms of their huge benefits to turf and soils alike.

There is a plethora of such products around, from biological to some that provide simple forms of plant nutrition but are marketed as a wonder product. In my many years of independent turf research looking at products and materials, I have looked at and measured the effects of such products on turf grass. A lot of these generic products show results leading me to conclude that cost by far out-ways results.

In my honest opinion there is no silver bullet solution in turf regardless of what people say. It’s important to use reliable tried and tested materials. We now live in a world where scaremongering is so rife people find it difficult to work out what is good information and what is poor information and what works and what doesn’t. It is important turf managers ask for quality literature to support and justify claims made and not just go by the sales hype in magazines or from company brochures or presentations. Often people are spending a lot of time and money on products that are producing that elusive few percent of improvement but does this 2% warrant the cost and timely application of such products? It has to be said that the amount of Iron or Nitrogen contained within some products is really the only thing that shows signs of improvement (hence the colour response) It’s the most expensive form of N or Fe they will ever buy.

One worrying aspect for me, is the publication of research by persons who are being paid to research, measure and evaluate the product or products by the product company so, again, it’s important to get such information from reputable sources and one’s you can place faith in. Therefore I have to question the validity and the authenticity of the work been carried out and the results presented. I am not saying dismiss for the sake of it, but ask for supportive data to justify claims made that warrant and justifies the expense.

Another problem occurs with chemical soil testing accuracy. The results from such tests allow companies to produce lists of recommendations of fertiliser programmes that encourage the purchase of products by the end users. These recommendations are given without any correlation to field trial response or historical site data. A lot of this type of information is not impartial. Significantly, much does X product improve turf? a few percent is not worth the cost but we need to see significant improvement in many facets. Also, has there been any statistical verification that such products improve turf? The answer to a lot of these is in short - No! We now live in a world where scaremongering is so rife people find it difficult to work out what is good information and what is poor information and what works and what doesn’t. It is important turf managers ask for quality literature to support and justify claims made and not just go by the sales hype in magazines or from company brochures or presentations. Often people are spending a lot of time and money on products that are producing that elusive few percent of improvement but does this 2% warrant the cost and timely application of such products? It has to be said that the amount of Iron or Nitrogen contained within some products is really the only thing that shows signs of improvement (hence the colour response) It’s the most expensive form of N or Fe they will ever buy.

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The Jacobsen Eclipse 322

The only 100% hydraulic-free greens mower available ... anywhere!

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By the way, did we mention ... no hydraulics.

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