

Bureaucrats On The Loose Again.

Pesticide Uses May be Lost Under FQPA

The 1996 Food Quality Protection Act (FIFRA Amendments) substantially changes the way pesticides are evaluated for safety.

To assess the risk of pesticides, EPA must now address the *total* exposures from residues in food as well as drinking water and residential sources. In addition, the accumulated exposure from chemicals with similar toxicity mechanisms will be evaluated.

Using the new assessment criteria, EPA has begun to decide which pesticides and pesticide uses will remain available and which registrations will be canceled.

What is going wrong?

Pesticide manufacturers say the requirements of the law are strict but achievable, provided EPA:

- allows development of the best scientific methodology to meet the new safety standards and revised objectives for protecting human health and the environment.
- bases decisions on actual updated scientific data and pesticide use; and
- establishes and communicates open, uniform and scientifically practical policies to guide consistent implementation of the new law.

FQPA allows EPA to use a process called "data-call-in" to obtain the scientific data necessary to conduct these new risk assessment evaluations.

However, early indications are that EPA is not planning to use the "data-call-in" provisions of the law, and is instead using a method called "default assumptions." These "default assumptions" about exposure and usage are in many cases overly conservative, inaccurate and unreliable.

Using "default assumptions" will likely result in the unnecessary loss of pest control products, especially in non-food markets such as turfgrass.

How will golf course superintendents be affected?

As a result of EPA's implementation of FQPA, golf course superintendents may lose access to valuable pesticides, thereby reducing maintenance

options. The practice of Integrated Pest Management will be compromised and maintenance costs inevitably will increase.



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Your Action Needed!

What can golf course superintendents do to help?

To maintain access to needed pesticides, user groups are working with industry to ensure that EPA implements the new law fairly and objectively by using the best scientific methodology and data, and the most accurate information about pesticide use. EPA officials have not been responsive to pleas from industry, but they will listen to Congress.

Call or write your member of Congress. Ask them to urge EPA to:

- **preserve** as many valuable pest management protection tools as possible;
- **use "data-call-ins"** to obtain the information necessary to accurately evaluate the safety of pesticide products;
- base decisions on **actual pesticide use**; and
- establish and communicate **uniform policies** for consistent FQPA implementation.

Editor's Note: To meet their agenda, latest reports have EPA canceling all tolerances for organophosphates! Your local chapter external vice president has been given a Congressional Contact Kit to help you join in the grassroots campaign. Dow AgroSciences reps are also assisting chapters with the letter-writing campaign. The GCSAA and a Florida coalition of pesticide user groups are working with a national coalition of manufacturers and other users to alert Congress to the impracticalities of EPA's approach. Get involved!

Turf Talk

What Do Golfers Really Want?

BY KEVIN DOWNING, CGCS

*Willoughby Golf Club and
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What do golfers really want when they play? Birdies, pars, a quality tee shot, a trouble shot that skips nicely up the approach onto the green?

What about a good, consistent putting surface? Whether you are a middle handicapper or a scratch player, golfers are affected by the condition of the playing surface more than any other sport.

The individuals responsible for conditioning the turf at the golf courses throughout our state are commonly called golf course superintendents or course managers. The decisions these turf managers make on a daily basis can have a tremendous impact on your enjoyment of golf.

As a matter of fact, the selections of turfgrass varieties for overseeding or bermuda foundation planting stock vary so much that these varieties could affect green speed in excess of two feet. With this type of diversity, it becomes apparent that golf course superintendents need to be aware of golfers' needs and golfers need to realize that grass solutions on golf courses are not always simple decisions.

In the early 1950s, bermudagrass putting surfaces were very coarse and probably not much better than a good tee of the 1990s. Varieties came along in 1956

that improved the putting quality quite a bit and then great strides were made in 1965 with the introduction of a variety called Tifdwarf.

Golfers who have played in Florida for any length of time are probably familiar with Tifdwarf, but most of them are probably unaware of its origin. No, it did not come from the shelves of Home Depot, and it is not available in a burlap bag at your local feed store.

Actually, Tifdwarf is a "mutated clone" that came from a Tifgreen putting surface at the Florence Country Club in South Carolina.

The original Tifgreens were developed by an artificial crossbreeding of two types of bermudagrass, creating a sterile triploid hybrid. That's enough botany for now, but the key item to remember is that the grasses for Florida golf courses come from vegetative parts rather than seed. The pure act of growing and planting vegetative grasses can cause a multitude of problems for putting surface consistency.

A number of years ago, you either chose Tifdwarf or Tifgreen and went from there, but now there are more flavors in the candy store and we surely hope they all taste good.

A little-known fact is that of the six or seven vendors who sold Tifdwarf throughout Florida in the last 25 years, each strain was slightly different and they adapted to site situations with unique

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