a major concern at all golf courses, except those fortunate enough to have unrestricted irrigation sources. Although with each passing month, there have been incremental increases in the amount of water available for irrigation, which has naturally helped.

As a result of timely winter rainfall, on April 18, the South Florida Water Management District returned to Phase II (30 percent reduction) restriction from the earlier Phase III (45 percent reduction). Yet, Turf Advisory Service visits have been made to several courses where a lack of sufficient water has already caused significant problems and a pronounced deterioration in turf health and quality.

With mild to warm temperatures throughout the winter, there has been no real slowdown in plant parasitic nematode activity. This has exacerbated drought stress problems and caused additional turf loss. With fairways and roughs, recovery from drought stress and nematode damage will be extremely difficult without regular and adequate rainfall. The start of the summer rainy season cannot come soon enough.

Most courses in Central and South Florida are implementing routine summer cultural management such as core aeration and aggressive verticutting of putting greens, tees, fairways, and roughs. These practices will always be unpopular with golfers because of the inconveniences caused, but accomplishing them on a timely basis is critical for promoting the resumption of active turf growth and recovering from the cumulative negative impacts of the winter season.

There are inevitably requests and demands that cultural management programs be delayed because during May, the start of reciprocal play and annual summer membership programs can help increase play and, in turn, revenues. The importance of timely initiation of cultural management programs cannot be over emphasized and the adage, “pay me now or pay me later” certainly applies in this situation. Furthermore, with reduced availability and/or increasing costs of pesticides, fertilizers, and other materials, there is even greater importance and need for agronomically-sound, basic practices and programs to maintain a healthy turf and good quality conditioning the majority of the time.

Bayer Names Wright Southwest Florida Wright

Adam Wright joins Bayer Environmental Science as field sales representative for the golf market in southwest Florida.

Prior to joining Bayer, Wright was the director of golf course operations for Laurel Oak Country Club in Sarasota. He also served as a superintendent at Greystone Golf & Country Club in Birmingham, Ala.

A graduate of Tennessee Technological University, Wright holds a bachelor’s degree in agriculture, agronomy and crop sciences. He is currently enrolled in the University of South Florida to earn his master’s degree in business.