

**SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE WIDE-RANGING**

TIFTON, Ga. — A wide range of topics, from the future of methyl bromide to breeding mole cricket resistance in Bermudagrass, will be discussed at the 54th Annual Southeastern Turfgrass Conference which will be held at the Rural Development Center here, May 1 and 2.

The conference is sponsored by the University of Georgia Coastal Plan Experiment Station, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in cooperation with the U.S. Golf Association Green Section, Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association, Georgia Turfgrass Foundation and University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service.

The schedule on May 1 includes a pesticide and equipment calibration workshop and panel discussions on disease, insect and weed control in turf. Talks May 2 range from the future of methyl bromide and fumigation strategies, to progress in genetic engineering in Bermudagrass; and the *do's* and *don'ts* of equipment leasing.

Information about registration is available by contacting the conference office at the Rural Development Center at 912-386-3416.

**Report activists**

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• The Clean Water Act is already causing use restrictions around the Chesapeake Bay area and is being considered in the Pacific Northwest.

• Individual counties and cities are also coming under increased pressure from anti-pesticide activists. In response to activist concerns, San Francisco

is phasing out the use of pesticides on all city- and county-owned facilities and is setting up a review committee that will oversee any use of pesticides. "Once this hit the Internet," said Langley, "there were imitators all over the country trying to duplicate these efforts."

According to Langley, the end result of these efforts could lead to a "domino effect," restricting the use of pesticides across the board.

"Their [activists] goal is to eliminate pesticides altogether," he said. "They define Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in a way that eliminates pesticide use. It can only be used as a last resort, and then it requires universal prenotification."

This definition of IPM, Langley pointed out, not only runs counter to the federal government's version but also promotes activism against the user community. Further, with the advent of local control initiatives, activists are attempting to circumvent the states' control over pesticide use. The fact that anti-pesticide activists are also well-networked via the Internet makes the groups even more dangerous to the user community, said Langley.

"We need to be more aware," he said. "The vulnerable area is tracking. We can track legislation on the national level and on the state level ... but when you get down to the local level we don't have anything that allows us to track it. By the time that we are even aware that something is happening on the local level, it is already happening. What we need is awareness on the part of the industry, such as superintendents and RISE members."

GCSAA President Scott Woodhead, who spoke later in the session, echoed Langley's call for action. "The GCSAA monitors legislation," he said. "But we can't stay up-to-date on what is happening locally. We hope that members will keep us informed on issues that arise within each metropolitan area, state and region."

To combat reduced-use activists and to promote RISE's reduced-risk philosophy, the organization has developed the Local Issue Plan of Action (LIPA) that sets up a response framework for a company or individual to report back to their trade association and let them know what is happening on the local level. RISE also maintains a Web site, [www.pestfacts.org](http://www.pestfacts.org), that outlines reduced risk guidelines and facts about pesticide use.

Langley hopes this will lead to a grassroots effort on the part of the user community to help set the record straight on pesticide use when local anti-pesticide issues arise in the future. ▶

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