

Industry news

Turf-Seed plans to unveil seashore paspalum variety

Hubbard, Ore. – This spring, Turf-Seed is planning to release Sea Spray, a commercially available seeded variety of seashore paspalum. Seashore paspalum, which has high tolerance to heat and salt, has been seen as a viable alternative to Bermudagrass, but time and money expenses to sprig and establish the variety has prohibited superintendents from selecting it for their golf courses. The ability to seed with Sea Spray is expected to make seashore paspalum more affordable and easier and quicker to establish.

“The seed grows much faster than sprigs,” says Gordon Zielinski, c.e.o. of Turf-Seed. “Trials held at the University of Hawaii show that Sea Spray gained 95-percent soil coverage after about five weeks – faster than any other variety studied.”

Once it's established, Sea Spray adapts to a variety of soil types and water-supply sources, including straight sea water. This means superintendents and professional turfgrass managers can irrigate Sea Spray with pure sea water and achieve water savings.

“If a golf course is lucky enough to have ocean water available, they can greatly lower their irrigation costs by pumping directly from the ocean,” Zielinski says.

The recommended seeding rate for Sea Spray is one pound per 1,000 square feet. Its dual root system of rhizomes and stolons, along with its high turf density and quick repair ability, make it well suited for golf course greens, tees and fairways.

Ohio State tests Nitamin

Columbus, Ohio – Georgia-Pacific and its Nitamin-coated sand distributor, Fairmount Minerals, released results of two Ohio State University turf studies. The OSU studies demonstrate the benefits of Nitamin-coated sand in core aeration and topdressing applications compared with traditional sand. The research results show quicker turf recov-

ery in core aeration applications and improved turf color and density in topdressing applications with Nitamin.

Nitamin is a patent-pending fertilizer that's effective for turf establishment, topdressing, divot repair and high-traffic areas. Because of its extended nitrogen release profile, Nitamin isn't required for every topdressing application. The patented Steady-Delivery technology ensures a steady supply of nitrogen is released within the soil, keeping turf green and healthy for months with fewer applications and low risk of turf burn.

“We wanted to determine if backfilling coring holes with Nitamin versus traditional sand would enhance core hole recovery,” says Dr. Karl Danneberger, professor at The Ohio State University's turfgrass science department. “Our experiments showed that after 11 days, the Nitamin-treated areas showed about two holes visible per plot compared with about 10 holes per plot on the traditional sand-treated areas.”



Nitamin-coated sand benefits turf in core aeration and topdressing applications, according to an OSU study.

The core aeration study was initiated on a three-year-old L93 bentgrass fairway established on native soil and mowed at 0.5 inches. On Aug. 10, 2004, plant growth regulator treatments were applied to the turf at different rates. Three days later, the OSU research team set up 3-foot-by-6-foot plots in a random block design and aerified them with 5/8-inch tines. After aeration, the team removed cores and allowed the plot area to settle and dry for three days. Then the core holes were filled with Nitamin or traditional sand.

To evaluate the effectiveness of using Nitamin in topdressing applications, the OSU team compared it with traditional sand at different rates and judged the results based on color and density.

“We discovered that applying Nitamin at a rate of 1.5 pounds per 30 square feet provided better color and density than traditional sand applied at the same rate,” Danneberger says. “The

lower rate of Nitamin applied at 0.75 pounds per 30 square feet also performed comparatively well.”

The topdressing study was conducted on creeping bentgrass turf established on a U.S. Golf Association-specified green. The constructed root zone was maintained at 0.125 inches. The treatments were replicated three times in 6-foot-by-5-foot plots, which were designed randomly.

Appropriations bill includes funding turfgrass research

Washington - President Bush signed into law Consolidated Appropriations bill H.R. 4818, funding of fiscal year 2005, for several federal agencies, including the USDA – Agricultural Research Service. In the bill, new funding for turfgrass research (\$275,000) was included at two new locations. The new funding was added as a result of efforts by the turfgrass industry to inform Congress of its research needs and the importance of the National Turfgrass Research Initiative. More information on the National Turfgrass Research Initiative can be found at www.turf-research.org. Turfgrass research now is funded within USDA-ARS at \$760,613.

The breakdown of the funding is:

- \$485,613 – restored funding for the current research position at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington. It was about \$490,000. All programs were cut by 0.8 percent;
- \$150,000 – new funding for turfgrass research at the Beaver, West Va., facility;
- \$125,000 – new funding for turfgrass research at the Logan, Utah, facility.

Because of last-minute congressional negotiations to resolve differences between House and Senate versions of the bill, the funding for West Virginia and Utah turf research positions was reduced by half of what was in the original bill.

Pickseed buys Seed Research of Oregon

Lindsay, Ont. - Pickseed Cos. Group