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Stable Manure Not Always Too Weedy to Use

By HUGH C. MOORE, Greenkeeper
Sea Island (Ga.) Golf Club

There has been a considerable lot said against using stable manure as a fertilizer. The main complaint is the large number of weed seeds liable to be present, unless the manure is well aged. I will admit that manure contains weed seeds, but I do not think there are any where near as many as some people would have you think.

In building my practice fairway, which is about three acres in size, I used stable manure with great success. I broadcast it about two inches thick over the entire area and disc-harrowed it in both directions. Then I planted Bermuda stolons, which matted quickly and permitted play in a very few weeks. The best feature of all was the fine root system; they are deeper in the ground and

Hugh Moore.
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the top growth is much more vigorous than on other of my fairways.

After a divot is taken out, even with a niblick, the most damageable club in the bag, the sore soon heals over, and it is hard to find where the divot was removed.

As for weeds, there were not many more in this piece of ground than any of the other fairways. Stable manure is a soil builder, gives the grass a quick start, and I find where you have plenty of grass you have less weeds. Poor soils with thin grass usually mean an abundance of weeds.

Even if stable manure does produce more weeds, steady cutting of the grass will eventually reduce them. Stable manure should especially help sandy soils, or any loose soils as a binder, also to hold the moisture.

I have had great success using liquid manure on my greens, finding that it brings color to the grass very quickly and gives a perfect mat. So, if any of you greenkeepers have a supply of stable manure available don't pass it up on account of a few weeds, for it is not the worst fertilizer that money can buy, and I only wish it was as plentiful as before the day of the great automobile industry.

There is one more point which is very essential. A compost made of stable manure should be housed under a shed with no sides so that there can be a circulation of air, otherwise there will be scalding. The shed roof is necessary, as manure left in the open, will soon leach out and lose its strength from the rains. A manure compost used for greens or tees should be thoroughly decomposed; for fairways it can be used much greener, yet if possible it is best for it to have at least six months aging.

Men who mow the greens should carry a weeding knife and take time to cut out of the turf any particularly large weeds they may observe during the mowing operation.

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