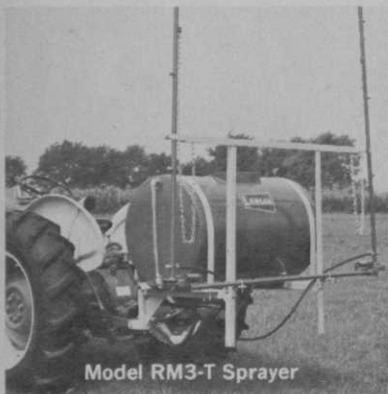


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DR. FRED V. GRAU

ANSWERS TO TURF QUESTIONS

WASTED RESOURCES

Maybe it's because I was brought up on a small farm in eastern Nebraska where we had to "make do" with what was at hand. We couldn't afford to buy coal; and there weren't enough trees to give us wood to burn in the cook stove, so we burned corn cobs.

Some of the cobs were nice and clean; those we got from the end of the corn sheller. Others we picked up in the hog lot where we had thrown the ears on the ground, letting the hogs do the shelling. The fragrance of the hog lot cobs burning in the kitchen stove didn't remind one of roses exactly, but they gave off enough heat to cook our meals. We got used to the smell after a while.

What I'm getting at now is this: It burns me up to see great, big, beautiful trees being pushed over by bulldozers that are clearing land for fairways on new golf courses. It wouldn't be so bad if these trees (beech, maple, oak, cedar, cherry, tulip poplar, pine, hickory) were sawed up and sold for firewood. Many people could burn the logs in their fireplaces. Then they wouldn't have to burn so much oil or gas to keep warm.

I know, because I have a fireplace. I love to sit in front of it and watch the flames licking and curling. Keeps me warm, too. I can turn the thermostat way down. But at \$40 or \$50 a cord, I can't really afford to keep the fireplace going all the time. Maybe I could at \$20 to \$25 a cord.

It makes me sick to be a witness to the burial of great trees merely because some people want "to get rid of them." It takes a long time for a tree to reach majestic size. Lots of time

and sun. There is a lot of energy tied up in that wood—too much to just bury and let rot. I have to ask, Why?

Are we in too big a hurry to get the golf course built that we can't take the time to cut up those logs for firewood? Why, we even have chippers that will turn the wood into a coarse kind of sawdust, which can be worked into the soil for expensive humus. The sawdust and chips will rot and grow good grass when mixed with soil and lime and fertilizer. Selling logs for firewood could bring in some extra revenue, too.

It is a terrible, unforgivable waste of our natural resources. If any contractor or builder reading this editorial will write to me and tell me that he makes good use of the trees that obstruct the building of a fairway, or a tee or a green, I'll put his name up for an award of some kind. Fact is, I'll write an article about him. Fair enough?

We dare not go on wasting our trees any more than we dare waste our precious water or our topsoil or anything else that is our natural heritage.

Conservation is upon us in a big way. Let's practice it everyday, every way.

Q—Concerning your design to "save" logs from trees that have to be cleared in building a golf course, can you relate one of your experiences?

(New Jersey)

A—The word "economics" governs the disposition of trees. In one case where there were 80 acres of trees to be cleared, the bid price for "burn and bury" was \$800 an acre. The alternative proposal was to "chip and carry

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Highlight



CHEWINGS-TYPE RED FESCUE

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Compass



TURF-TYPE PERENNIAL RYEGRASS

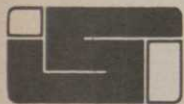
A truly fine-leaved turf-type perennial ryegrass. Compass is low-growing and fast germinating. It develops sod of above average density and is resistant to excessive traffic and wear. It's dark green color and fine leaf means it will blend beautifully with other standard lawn grasses such as Kentucky bluegrass and red fescue.

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GRAU from page 18

away." The bid price per acre was \$2,200. The difference in favor of "burn and bury" was \$112,000. Ecological considerations prohibit "bury pits" where the rotting wood might contaminate adjacent streams or ground water supplies. In one area where fireplace wood sells at \$50 a cord, the contractor could not find anyone to help him cut and stack the wood. The four-letter word, "work," was responsible for the lack of helpers.

Q—Would you contribute more information on the salvaging of trees?

(Ohio)

A—Unless a fireplace is especially designed to produce heat, it may waste more than it generates. At night when the fire is cooling down, the open damper (essential) will allow warm air from the house to be drawn up the chimney at a prodigious rate. A heat-resistant glass shield in front of the fireplace will greatly reduce loss of warm air.

Q—We are salvaging wood from trees that must be felled to clear land for a new nine hole course. Some of it will be cut for firewood and our question is, "what kinds of wood are best for fireplace use?"

(Maryland)

A—My personal preferences will heavily weight my answer, because we used to cook our meals over the fireplace during the War. My choices, pretty much in the order in which I've listed them, are: 1) beech: slow burning, fragrant, hot fire, no sparks from popping; 2) apple: hot, slow, fragrant; 3) cherry: same reasons, but a different fragrance; 4) oak: just a very good, hot fire; 5) cedar, when you can get it: wonderful aroma, and 6) hickory: good, hot fire.

Woods that I'm not too fond of are: 1) locust: hard to ignite, not a good fragrance; 2) chestnut: "pops" too much (I burned up a favorite arm-chair once because the sparks popped halfway across the room); 3) pine: hot, but burns too fast; 4) maple: okay, if it's rock or hard (sugar); soft maple burns too fast; 5) tulip poplar and poplar are soft and fast burning.

Obviously, I've not named all of our native woods. These are the leading favorites and not so favorites. I'll welcome comments from readers. □

