When It Comes To Turf Quality, Ask Those Closest To It.

"I wish my feeding schedule could be as consistent and predictable as our course's POLYON® fertilizer program."

– Mary, Tom Leahy's Black Lab

The two most dependable things at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, New York are controlled-release POLYON® fertilizer and Mary, Superintendent Tom Leahy's Black Lab. "POLYON is the meat and potatoes of fertilizers. It delivers consistency and longevity," says Tom.

To experience that kind of loyalty or simply become a POLYON customer, talk to your Agrium Advanced Technologies rep or call 800.422.4248. Tell us what your dog thinks at agriumat.com/dog and win great prizes for you and your pooch!
All superintendents know that to fully understand plant health and durability, they need to be aware of the impact that soil can have on their turf. Floratine Products Group provides one of the most comprehensive and accurate soil evaluation systems in the industry. Floratine works with Harris Laboratories to perform chemical extraction, water extraction and soluble paste tests to measure chemical components and nutrient availability. The data is then run through the proprietary AnaLync system, an exclusive partner to Floratine, which analyzes soil, water and environmental factors to give superintendents the most accurate information about their soil. All of this gives superintendents an in-depth look at possible soil issues, allowing them to better treat and strengthen their turf. To learn more about Floratine’s soil evaluation, or for a list of Floratine distributors, please visit www.floratine.com.

**TABLE 1**

We have released nine vegetative and seeded type cultivars since the start of our breeding program in 1984.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultivar</th>
<th>Year Released</th>
<th>Propagation Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>609</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Vegetative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Vegetative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>378</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Vegetative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatanka</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Vegetative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowie</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Vegetative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWI-2000</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Seed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concluded from page 60**

Concern for the turfgrass industry, these characteristics and the drought resistance of buffalograss will become even more important and its acceptance as a golf course turfgrass species will continue to increase.

**Improvements made**

The following cultivars are some examples of the excellent improvements in buffalograss turfgrass performance that we have been able to make.

**Legacy** is a dark blue-green cultivar with a low growth habit and excellent turfgrass quality. It is noteworthy for its reduced canopy height and rapid lateral spread, making it an excellent turf-type buffalograss. Legacy is adapted to the central and northern Great Plains, but it has performed well as far north as Toronto and as far east as Maryland. It has excellent winter hardiness.

**Prestige** is a vegetative cultivar with a wide range of adaptation. Prestige is lighter green than Legacy, and tolerates mowing heights as low as one-half inch (Photo 1, p. 60). It has an extended green cover period that is enhanced by its greening up early in the spring and staying green longer in the fall than most other cultivars. It also has excellent winter hardiness, and is adapted to the southern through northern Great Plains. Prestige also has excellent chinch bug (*Blissus occiduus*) resistance.

**Bowie**, a seeded, turf-type buffalograss, has a wide range of adaptation and very good turfgrass quality characteristics. Bowie is comparable to Tatanka and 609 for turfgrass quality, but is darker green and has a wider range of adaptation than either of those cultivars. It has very good seed yield potential, similar or better than Texoka. Bowie has excellent winter hardiness and excellent mealybug [*Tridiscus sporoli* (Cockerell) or *Trionymus* spp.] resistance. In 2006, we released SWI-2000. It performs and appears similar to Bowie, but has superior seed yield potential.

**Continued on page 64**

**PHOTO 2**

Selections are based on desirable turfgrass color and quality, and tolerance to low mowing heights. This selection is being evaluated at five-eighths of an inch (foreground) and 2.5 inches (background), and receives 1 inch of water per month. This photo was taken in July 2007.
Turf Action Plans from Floratine provide a convenient, economical and targeted solution for many common yet challenging turf issues. Our TAP Packs are pre-measured for easy use, each TAP Pack covers up to one full acre and protects against stress and disease, while promoting plant nutrition for the strongest turf. To learn more about a Turf Action Plan that's right for you, talk to your local Floratine distributor or visit www.floratine.com.
Our buffalograss breeding program is based on a team effort. In 2002, we formed a working group to address the complex issues of improving buffalograsses. The following individuals are current members of this working group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Group Member</th>
<th>Area of Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob Shearman, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Leader/Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bekele Abeyo, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Baxendale, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Entomology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roch Gaussoin, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Weed Science &amp; Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loren Giesler, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Plant Pathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiffany Heng-Moss, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Entomology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Lee, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Genetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gautam Sarath, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Molecular Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desalegn Serba</td>
<td>Breeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenton Peterson</td>
<td>Physiology &amp; Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songul Severmutlu</td>
<td>Physiology &amp; Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Twigg, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Molecular Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Vogel, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Breeding and Genetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lannie Wit</td>
<td>Project Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certainly, we are fortunate to have several excellent cultivars available for golf course use. Some of these cultivars are being used in golf course roughs with good success and performance, but their use has been limited.

Three aspects have been the primary limiting factors for use of buffalograss to date on golf course turfs. First, turf-type buffalograsses are new to the industry, and it takes time for any to accept the use of a new turfgrass species in the industry. Second, it is relatively expensive to establish buffalograss. Vegetative plantings are costly and labor intensive. Seed sources are relatively expensive compared to other turfgrass species. Third, buffalograss is a warm-season species with excellent winter hardiness, but has an extended winter dormancy period. Prestige with its extended green period is certainly an exception to this concern.

I believe acceptance of buffalograss is on the increase due primarily to concerns of our industry over water conservation and the need to reduce inputs, like fertilizer and pesticide use. As more individuals use buffalograss on golf courses, its acceptance by the turfgrass industry will definitely increase.

Improving seed yield and establishment potential are also important. We have placed an emphasis on improving seed yield potential of our current germplasm (Photo 3, p. 66). Improving seed yield will reduce costs for the end user and improves returns for the seed producers.

We have made excellent strides in this regard and have recently placed eight experimental lines with outstanding seed yield characteristics into extensive regional turfgrass evaluation trials. Pending their overall performance in these trials, we anticipate their potential release in the next year or two.

We also have some excellent vegetative experimental lines (Photo 2, p. 62) that have very good fairway and rough turfgrass characteristics. Five vegetative experimental lines were also placed in regional turfgrass evaluation trials. These lines have outstanding turfgrass quality and drought resistance traits, and several have excellent chinch bug resistance characteristics as well. These lines tolerate low mowing and require limited fertilizer inputs. We anticipate release of some of these lines in the very near future.

Twenty years of improving buffalograss is a relatively short time compared to the time and efforts put into improving Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, tall fescue and bermudagrass. We are pleased with the progress made to date, but we also know that as buffalograss is accepted for use in our industry there will be even more improvements made in the future. Certainly, buffalograss has a great deal of variable and desirable traits that can be exploited for the benefit of turfgrass use. It is just a matter of taking advantage of these attributes and putting them to use.

Conclusions
The acceptance of buffalograss as a relatively new turfgrass species has come along way in a little over two decades of selection, breeding and improvement. As water shortages become more of an issue in the future, the need to conserve water for turfgrass use will become even more essential.

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Ante-chemical activist groups have expanded beyond Washington into city council sessions and town hall meetings with an agenda to ban or restrict the pesticide and fertilizer products you use.

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Make it personal. Get involved. Draw the line.

RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment)® is the national trade association representing the specialty pesticide and fertilizer industries.
PHOTO 3

Robert (Bob) C. Shearman holds a distinguished professorship in the Agronomy and Horticulture Department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His responsibilities include research, teaching and extension. He is Sunkist Fiesta Bowl professor of agronomy, and is currently in charge of the buffalograss breeding program.

REFERENCES


Project Coordinator Bekele Abeyo observes advanced lines that have been selected for improved seed yield potential and turfgrass performance.
Poa annua invades bentgrass fairways and greens often out-competing bentgrass and other desirable grasses, eventually becoming the dominant turf species. Cutless turf growth regulator can help you fight this encroachment, and shift the competitive advantage back to your desirable turfgrass. Unlike some plant growth regulators, Cutless constricts the Poa annua but is gentle on desirable grasses such as bentgrass, allowing the bentgrass to grow and establish in the constricted Poa annua colonies. So free your bentgrass and squeeze the Poa annua out of your fairways and greens. Use Cutless, the *Poa Constrictor!*  

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Matt Shaffer  
Director of Golf Course Operations,  
Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, PA

SePRO Corporation 11550 North Meridian Street, Suite 600, Carmel, IN 46032

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May You Live In Interesting Times

BY CHRISTOPHER S. GRAY SR., CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

It could pop out of a fortune cookie. But this famous and seemingly innocent Chinese proverb quoted above isn’t a fortune at all. It’s a curse.

The word “interesting” in this context actually means dangerous or turbulent. And secondly, it’s not close to Chinese in origin. In fact, it’s an American creation. Scholars have collectively agreed there is no such expression in Chinese teachings, although it is thought to be related to the Chinese proverb that says, “It’s better to be a dog in peaceful times than a man in a chaotic period.”

The English iteration first appeared in an article in Astounding Science Fiction, but it was popularized when Robert F. Kennedy famously evoked these words in his Day of Affirmation Address at Cape Town, South Africa in 1966.

Regardless of its origin, the point of the phrase has long meant to be ironic, largely because Confucianism places value on stability and constancy.

None of us can deny that we currently live in very interesting times, both personally and professionally. Pick up any business magazine and read about the ongoing court battles with genetically engineered grasses, or the ever-growing controversies between brand-name chemicals and the post-patent products flooding the market, or the constantly changing immigration laws and H-2B provisions that directly affect many of our already-stressed labor issues. After perusing these “interesting” articles, how could you not long for simpler, less turbulent times?

During the next few years, we are facing several “interesting” issues that will reshape our industry for the next decade and beyond.

Oh captain, my captain

He was our fearless leader for the past 14 years, but Steve Mona is leaving us for the blue waters of Florida and the World Golf Foundation. I think I have read just about every industry magazine article concerning Mona leaving the GCSAA. After the third or fourth one, they all start sounding the same. For those of you who might have missed them, here’s a quick summary: Mona was a great leader; he led the association into the 21st century; he had more

Continued on page 70
How to take control to the next level.

For the highest standards in complete control for your course, contact your local FMC sales representative or your local authorized FMC Distributor or Sales Agent.

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Works better than a putter on cutworms.

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The best short game on sedges.
Water issues might not be so black and white as local water districts continue to scrutinize availability and usage.

Continued from page 68

successes than failures; he will be sorely missed, and his successor will have big shoes to fill. There you go. I just saved you countless minutes of valuable reading time.

Don’t get me wrong, I truly like Mona and I will miss him. But I am more interested in exploring who will be filling those shoes and taking over the helm of the GCSAA ship.

In all likelihood his successor will come from somewhere in the golf industry. After reading “Position and Candidate Specification” prepared by Spencer Stuart (the consulting firm conducting initial screening and interviews), this becomes blatantly apparent. The first point under “Ideal Experience” states that the candidate should possess a “minimum of five to 10 years management experience in a golf association, foundation or other sports-related organization or business.” This awfully specific criterion limits the field of candidates dramatically.

Simple logic suggests looking toward the established executives and managing directors of both the larger GCSAA chapters and state golf associations for qualified candidates. For those members who are looking for Steve Mona version 2.0, which from my perspective is a pretty large group, you should be hoping that history repeats itself. Mona, himself, served for 10 years as the executive director for the Georgia State Golf Association.

Alas, for many more of us “rebel” members, ideal experience alone should not determine the next captain of our 110-strong staff-member ship known as the GCSAA. We are looking for a new direction to sail into, far from the tidal waves and rough seas of such endeavors as the infamous GCSAA Headquarter Relocation Study. Yikes!

We, and I’m including myself with this group, are excited about the possibility of having a new perspective and innovative ideas for the GCSAA and the members. I suggest that, perhaps, it’s time for someone not so familiar with the trials and tribulations of our association to bring a fresh pair of eyes to peer at what we’ve become, and more importantly, see where we should be going. Many members became very comfortable with Mona running the association, but there is a very fine line between comfort and complacency.

In the end, whomever is selected and approved by the board of directors as the next CEO of the GCSAA, two things are absolutely certain. Some people will be overly happy with the selection, while others will believe beyond a shadow of a doubt that Armageddon has begun for the association. In turn, the new CEO will be both praised and criticized way too much for every move he or she makes. It certainly doesn’t get much more “interesting” than that.

Oh water, where art thou?

Anyone else have water issues last season? I’m sure that in some small way, the superintendents of the Southwest had to feel just a little slighted about all the press that this year’s drought received from all over the country. They have been constantly dealing with numerous water issues since their