

# A Meeting with the Secretary of Agriculture



*PICTURED WITH THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE are, from the left, Kevin Morris, NTF; Tom Delaney, PLANET; Bob Shearman, Ph.D., University of Nebraska; Clark Throssell, Ph.D., GCSAA; Secretary of Agriculture Johanns; Ike Thomas, TPI, Mike Kenna, USGA, Brian Horgan, Ph.D., U of M, and David Williams, Ph.D., University of Kentucky.*

Last year I was honored by my peers to be elected to the National Turfgrass Federation Board of Directors. The mission of this board is to elevate turfgrass science as a discipline and lobby for federal funding for research and extension. Over the last four years, the NTF has successfully lobbied congress to establish a turfgrass research program under the United States Department of Agriculture - Agriculture Research Service (USDA-ARS). Currently, the USDA-ARS has hired three scientists that are located across the country. The long-term goal is to assist USDA-ARS in hiring 20 turfgrass scientists with \$2,000,000 in discretionary research funds to be used in conjunction with University faculty across the country. These discretionary funds could, for example, be directed to the University of Minnesota to perform collaborative research projects with the USDA-ARS scientists.

To continue the lobbying efforts, members of the NTF board of directors recently met with Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns in Washington, D.C.

The meeting included Tom Delaney, Professional Landcare Network; Mike Kenna, Ph.D., USGA Green Section; Clark Throssell, Ph.D., GCSAA; Bob Shearman, Ph.D., University of Nebraska; Brian Horgan, Ph.D., University of Minnesota; David Williams, Ph.D., University of Kentucky; Ike Thomas, Turfgrass Producers International, and Kevin Morris, National Turfgrass Federation, Inc. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the turfgrass industry and the National Turfgrass Research Initiative.

*—Brian Horgan*

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