

Dr. Brian Horgan - A Minnesota Wonder!

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If you are a turfgrass professional working in Minnesota, what thoughts or words pop into your head when you hear the name Dr. Brian Horgan? I see words like visionary, energetic, well-respected, idea guy, optimistic, intelligent, passionate, confident, and the list goes on and on. Let's just say the gods of fortune were smiling on the Minnesota Turfgrass Industry back in 2001 when the University of Minnesota brought him on board.

After completing his PhD work at the University of Illinois under the tutelage of Dr. Bruce Branham, he joined the University of Minnesota faculty. Dr. Horgan is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota and holds the title of Turfgrass Extension Specialist. His research interests revolve around nutrient fate and turfgrass water conservation. Specifically, he is interested in improving nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizer recommendations and gaining a better understanding of the fate of phosphorus in our environment. Dr. Horgan has spent the last five years researching turfgrass water conservation strategies utilizing new technologies, ET predictors and proper plant selection. He, along with Dr. Eric Watkins, conducts NTEP trials and works with alternative low-input turfgrass species.

Brian was the impetus behind the creation and development of TROE Center (Turfgrass Research, Outreach and Education) research facility on the University of Minnesota St. Paul campus. The creation of this research complex in 2003 put Minnesota Turfgrass research on the map. It is here that most of the research studies are conducted and where an annual Field Day is held to expose industry stakeholders to research in progress.



BRIAN HORGAN, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota

When the Minnesota legislature decided that our state should be the first in the nation to ban phosphorous fertilizer, Dr. Horgan, along with several members of MGCSA, stepped forward to work with the politicians. The end result was a golf course exemption clause in lieu of completing a training and certification program for golf course personnel. This certification program was designed and taught by Dr. Horgan. Because of this successful collaboration, Brian and the MGCSA received a rare recognition award from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

He was instrumental in creating a one-week academic course called the School of Turfgrass Management in collaboration with faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The course rotates annually between Madison and St. Paul and is well attended by assistants, grounds staff and anyone looking for a

solid background in basic Turfgrass management. When you talk to students that were taught, mentored, or advised by Brian, a common theme emerges. He is highly respected and held in high regard.

Because of the value of this cutting-edge research to day-to-day golf course operations, Brian is highly sought after for speaking engagements. Since joining the University of Minnesota faculty ten years ago, Brian has earned a reputation that is in high demand at educational gatherings around the world. He has presented across the USA, in Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia and South America. His cutting-edge research combined with his engaging, easy-going, thought-provoking teaching style keeps him very busy on the speaking circuit. When you attend a seminar taught by Brian, his passion and excitement for his work shines through. He genuinely loves what he does. He is truly global and we here in Minnesota could not ask for a better representative.

Consequently, as President of MGCSA, I am proud to recognize the incredible contributions made by Dr. Horgan in these short ten years. Rarely does an individual impact an industry to this level in such a short time period. It became evident that Dr. Horgan would be the perfect recipient for the MGCSA Presidents' Award (last presented in 2005). Therefore, in December 2010, at the annual MGCSA Awards Banquet, I had the honor of presenting the MGCSA President's Award to Dr. Brian Horgan in recognition of his vision, dedication and outstanding contributions to the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' profession and to the Minnesota Turfgrass Industry. Moreover, on top of all this, he has a rather impressive golf game. Dr. Brian Horgan truly is a Minnesota wonder.

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