

THE MISSION OF THE HANCOCK TURFGRASS RESEARCH CENTER

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Up until 1980, research on turfgrass was done at various locations around the campus of Michigan State University. Golf course superintendents and turf managers also did their own research on their property trying to find the best combination to grow grass. A centralized location close to the campus was needed to consolidate their research. The present site at the corner of Farm Lane and Mount Hope was selected. The initial 10 acres were established with the help of many superintendents and contractors from around the state of Michigan.

By 1991 the research program had outgrown the area and an adjoining 8 acres were developed. The area was drained, irrigation installed and seeded over the next 3 years. The entire area contains 84,000 square feet of greens, 173,000 square feet of fairways, 371,000 square feet of park and lawn area and 36,000 square feet of athletic fields.

At the present time there are 6 faculty members from the Department of Crop and Soils, 2 from Entomology and 1 from the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology working at the Turf Center. There are also 10 graduate students conducting research for the various professors. Some of the areas of research this year included variety trials, soil fertility, nutrient and pesticide fate, weed control, diseases, insects and athletic fields.

The highlight of the summer program is the Field Day held each year in August. This year, approximately 1200 people attended the research tour, trade show and equipment auction. The turf center also holds smaller tours for the Golf Association of Michigan, several 4-H groups and garden clubs.

Everyone involved with the research program at MSU would like to thank the turfgrass industry for their support of equipment, fertilizer, chemicals and other products needed to run a successful research program.