

Ask Us What To Do

A page for the discussion of intimate problems on turf culture and plant growth. We are an international authority on these subjects. Send in your questions—your name will not be used.

Fescues and blue grass are said not to be indigenous to the soils of Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio. Should no attempt be made to seed grasses of this type in these sections?

The soils of Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio are not the natural homes for grasses growing best under neutral or slightly alkaline conditions. Shale clays are largely responsible for these acid conditions and are best corrected by heavy phosphorus feedings. Bone meal as a source of phosphorus, would act too slowly. They will thrive if properly cared for in this manner. (Penn.)

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I have seen rhododendrons growing wild in the mountains of the South and always among limestone boulders. This seems to indicate lime is needed for their healthy growth rather than acid conditions. Am I right?

Rhododendrons on mountain sides grow in pockets in which debris, washed from the slopes, has collected. The debris would be largely leaves, twigs and decaying wood, and the greater part of the year this pocket would be filled with water. This makes a characteristic undrained peat deposit in the process of putrefaction and is necessarily acid. Hardwood peat in the earliest stages of decay, producing an abundance of potash, is the ideal medium in which to grow rhododendrons. (Ohio)

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We have put great dependence in ammonium sulphate when needing quick recovery on our greens. If its use is continued for too long a time, it loses its effect. Why?

You have but a limited amount of lime in your soil and this will eventually be taken up by the sulphuric acid, freed from such a feeding. When this occurs, there will possibly be no alkaline base with which the nitric acid formed by the soil bacteria can combine to make the soluble nitrate feeding required by the turf. If lime water is then applied in liberal quantities, recovery should be imme-

diately. This should be applied while the water still holds a small amount of lime in suspension. (Ohio)

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I have moved my sweet pea bed each year but have found no place where they will do well. Some of my friends have no such trouble.

Stop moving them. Before planting next season, spread a small amount of complete fertilizer in the trench, thoroughly mixing with the soil. Borrow a quart can of soil from your friend's sweet pea bed, spreading it through the trench before planting. Your friend's soil is well supplied with the particular nodule producing bacteria the sweet peas require. Inoculation in this manner, is probably what you have needed. (Ohio)

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Our fairways were made on virgin blue grass sod in a very productive farming section but they have not produced good blue grass turf. Should they be topdressed?

Your fairways have probably been blue grass pasture land and pastured close for many years. It is very likely a case of taking off much and putting back but little to replace lost feedings. Most lands of this description, rarely show more than ten pounds of phosphorus to the acre. (Truog.) An application of complete fertilizer, heavy in phosphorus, should be made, followed by a topdressing of well-rotted manure. (West Virginia)

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What is now considered the best and most economical method of producing topdressing?

The great majority of golf clubs still stir their compost heaps by hand. Many clubs are doing without topdressings because of the expense incurred in preparing in this manner.

Undoubtedly the most economical and best method is to take one-half acre of ground in an out-of-the-way location on the course which should be plowed deeply, disced and harrowed until fine. Upon this area should be spread 45 tons of good