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- Faster seed germination
- Deeper root development
- Delays dormancy in fall
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**“Monthly Field Tip”**

*Turf Blankets* by Bob Curry

Turf blankets, also called turf growth blankets, create a greenhouse effect over covered turf. Properly constructed blankets allow turf to breathe, while trapping optimum amounts of heat, light and moisture to develop an ideal environment for growth. The effect encourages deep root growth for strong, healthy plants.

Originally developed to protect natural turf against winter wind and desiccation damage, turf blankets have proven to be useful tools in all seasons. They can hasten spring green-up, especially in cold climates. In some cases, field use can begin two to three weeks sooner than normal on covered fields. Blankets can also delay dormancy of Bermuda in autumn to provide green fields late into the season.

Blankets can help expedite recovery of heavy-wear areas. They can also speed new seed germination. As an added benefit, blankets reduce seed loss, since they guard against both wind and birds.

Turf growth blankets are even used to protect against morning frost. Covering areas where frost is forecast at night can minimize or eliminate the effect.

**Construction**

Blankets should be treated to withstand damaging ultra-violet sun effects. They must be highly rot and mildew resistant to hold up to the elements. Properly treated blankets should not show significant wear, even after years of use.

Turf blankets should have smooth surfaces to prevent dirt and debris accumulation. They should feature lightweight construction for quick and easy installation and removal.

Whenever possible, use a one-piece cover. Avoid overlapping sections to prevent quality and color variation of covered turf. ▲

*Bob Curry is president of Covermaster Inc. He also serves as STMA's commercial vice president. To contact the company, call: (800) 387-5808, or visit: www.covermaster.com.*

DID YOU KNOW? Recurring weed problems may be linked to drainage patterns. (IPM Handbook)