lawn care companies, man-
ufacturers, retailers, uni-
versity extensions services
and associations offering
community events and ed-
ucational programs to in-
crease public awareness.
In marking the special
week, the association offers
these grasscycling tips:
• Keep mower blades
sharp.
• Mow at proper inter-
vals so no more than one-
third of lawn height is trim-
med at each cutting.
• Maintain proper water
and fertilization levels.

NEWS BRIEFS

THE SUBJECT WAS BENTGRASS...at the re-
cent Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium in Mil-
waukee. Dr. Joe Duich
advised seed buyers to
make careful note of seed lot numbers and re-
tain all records “to insure they get what they
pay for.” Kevin Dushane,
superintendent at the
Bloomfield Hills Country Club in Union Lake,
Mich., said that, “golfers—principally lower
handicap players—would like to have a fair-
way lie where the ball sits up on the turf. Mow-
ing at 1/2-inch with a good stand of bentgrass
can deliver that playing condition.”

FLOWER GUIDE...A full-color 28-page book-
let designed for the golf/landscape profes-
sional is being offered by the Professional Plant
Growers Association. It contains valuable in-
formation on planning, planting and maintain-
ing flowering annuals:
• a herbicide tolerance chart;
• a list of 63 popular flowering annuals with
photos; and
• a chart describing each plant with regard
to spacing, ease of maintenance, height, light,
motion and temperature requirements, de-
gree of hardiness.
To order, send $2 to: PPGA, P.O. Box 27517,
Lansing, MI 48909.

IN THE WORKS...An “Envirotron” is in the
works at the University of Florida in Gaines-
ville. The structure, already approved by the
Florida Turfgrass Research Foundation Board
of Directors, is a field laboratory with com-
ponents for rootzone, greenhouse and other con-
trolled environment features. The complete
Envirotron will consist of 3,172 sq. ft. of phy-
totron, head, house, storage, wet laboratory,
rhizotron with automatic retractable rain shel-
ter, and living quarters. Funding for the
$700,000 project is expected to be completed by
April 1.

THE FUTURE IN VIDEO...“Growing Fu-
tures,” a career video, is soon to be released by
the Green Industry Council of Sutton, Mass.
Careers in landscape architecture, design and
construction; interior landscaping; turf man-
agement; arboriculture; and nursery and
greenhouse management are among those
highlighted in the 18-minute video. “There is
definitely a positive future,” says Byron
Gechtel in the video. To order the videotape,
send $49.95 to: Green Industry Council, P.O.
Box 171, Sutton, MA 01590 or call Phyllis
Gillespie at (508)476-3007. Along with the tape,
you get a color poster and booklet on career
opportunities and educational programs.

RESEARCH

Thatch, weed cure:
longhorns on lawn?

AUSTIN, Tex. — Eleven
Texas longhorns have
taken up residence at the
National Wildflower Re-
search Center to help re-
searchers find the best
method of restoring native
prairie land. The cattle,
which arrived last Novem-
ber, will be used at first to
reduce the amount of
thatch in the center's 15
vegetated acres, as well as
to control bermudagrass.

"There is a major push to
restore and maintain
prairie land," says Alison
Hill, Wildlife Center com-
community ecologist. "Cattle
have been a natural part of
the tallgrass prairie in
Texas. This long-term
study is to discover the best
way to rehabilitate the land
from a monoculture to a
greater diversity of plant
species."

Wildflower Center re-
searchers will study the ef-
fects of grazing as a tool to
control exotic grasses so
native prairie grass species
can be re-introduced and
encouraged to grow.

In a non-related study, the research center has
developed soil fungi experi-
ments aimed at more
successfully re-establish-
ing nursery-grown native
plants into landscapes.

Center personnel have
found that plant seedlings
grown in the soilless me-
dium often used by nurs-
eries grow better and don't
require as much fertilizer
when inoculated with my-
corrhizae, fungi that help
them absorb more nutri-
tants and water. Once some
plants have been inocu-
lated, they remain so, bene-
fitting from the fungi
throughout their lives and
requiring less water and
fertilizer. The fungi are also
re-introduced into the soil,
where other plants may
benefit from them.

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