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Circle No. 108 on Reader Inquiry Card
We’ve got the Poa annua blues

What can we do to manage Poa annua (annual bluegrass)?

-OHIO

Annual bluegrass thrives in shaded, compacted, and poorly drained areas. Improve growing conditions to promote the desirable turfgrass growth. Proper fertilizing, watering, mowing and aerating will benefit desirable turfgrass and make it better able to compete with opportunistic weed plant infestation.

In areas where the Poa annua problem is severe, consider treating with non-selective herbicides such as Roundup or Finale, and reseed.

There are some other chemical strategies that may be more suitable for particular sites. For instance, consider using growth regulators such as Primo from Novartis, TGR from Scotts, or Cutless from Dow AgroSciences. These growth regulators help suppress annual bluegrass by allowing desirable turfgrass to compete for light, space, nutrients. Reports also indicate that the Chipco Ronstar brand of oxadiazon herbicide from Rhone-Poulenc, can also effectively help manage Poa annua. Ronstar is a preemergent herbicide which can help manage problem grassy weeds such as crabgrass or goosegrass, as well as annual bluegrass weeds. Regularly, one application in the late summer or early fall will help manage annual bluegrass for the season without the need for repeated applications or the risk of phytotoxicity.

Herbicides in packets are handy

I have been using the non-selective herbicide Roundup in the powder packet for many years. It’s easy to mix in a hand-held sprayer. Is there a product for selective weed control that comes in a packet like Roundup?

-MICHIGAN

Dissolve herbicide comes in either 25 lb. (10 x 2½-lb. packets) or 5 lb. (8 x 10-ounce packets). These packets are designed to be mixed with several gallons of water for treating large areas. This water-soluble product is a three-way postemergent selective herbicide containing the amines of 2, 4-D, Mecoprop and Dichlorprop for use on golf courses, parks, highway, sod farms, ornamental turf lawns and similar non-crop areas. It controls a number of common weeds including some that are considered difficult to manage.

According to the label, a 2½-lb. packet will treat from 43,000 to 58,000 sq. ft. (1 to 1½ acres) of cool season turfgrasses. For warm season turfgrasses, it can be used over 1½ to 2 acres.

For best results, target the applications when weeds are growing. Spring and fall are generally the best times to treat.

The label suggests that exposure to moisture before mixing may cause water-soluble bags to rupture. Take all the precautions and follow mixing guidelines as specified in the label.

For more about weed control, see our weed control guides which begin on page 42. —ed.
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Circle No. 111 on Reader Inquiry Card
Brickman to expand Investments to increase service to commercial accounts

As large corporations and significant property management associations continue to “outsource” their landscaping needs, the industry itself is responding by offering services at regional and national levels. The Brickman Group Ltd. has arranged a partnership with two large financial institutions to fund major expansion efforts into the next century.

“We can provide national or regional service at a reduced price, which helps us stand out in this highly fragmented business dominated by small, local companies,” explains Scott Brickman, who now becomes president and chief executive officer of the Langhome, PA-based operation.

“This transition is a positive step in the continuing evolution of The Brickman Group as a national leader in our industry,” says Dick Brickman, Scott’s father, who moves up to chairman after 40 years as president and CEO.

The exact terms of the investment plans are not being disclosed, but the financing will be provided by First Chicago Equity Capital and Continental Illinois Venture Corp.

Most of the company’s expansion is expected to involve increasing its current staffing levels. “The foundation of our business has been internal growth,” says Scott Brickman. “It’s really not going to be different than anything we’ve done over the years,” he points out. “We’ve been growing regionally for years—we just have a different ownership structure (now).”

The goals do not exclude the purchase of existing firms in various markets, but the growth thrust is likely to remain in-house. The annual internal growth rate has been holding steady at 20 percent. “Our biggest limitations are people,” Scott confides. “Sales is not the challenge—it’s developing good management people.”

Buying other landscape companies remains a viable strategy, but any actual deals will depend upon specific situations. “We’ll be doing acquisitions as opportunities present themselves,” Scott notes. “It’s really not that scientific,” he reveals, “we enter new markets as opportunities present themselves.”

That being said, Brickman invites business owners to make a pitch if they are so inclined. “If people are interested in selling we’re interested in talking to them, but we’re under no pressure to do anything.”

Founded in 1939, The Brickman Group generates annual revenues of about $100 million. Its 45 branches in the Midwest and on the East Coast cover numerous commercial accounts for corporations such as McDonald’s, IBM, Motorola and properties under the management of LaSalle Partners, Trammel Crow and Liberty Property Trust.

“We can now take advantage of two growing trends in our industry,” says Scott, “toward outsourcing of corporate services and toward property management consolidation by Real Estate Investment Trusts and other national property managers.”

Dick Brickman, 65, son of company founder Theodore Brickman Sr., observes that “this investment ensures that The Brickman Group will continue to provide high-quality landscaping services to our customers across the east and Midwest. Importantly,” he adds, “this partnership will enable us to expand our services across the country.”

Brickman’s day-to-day management operations will remain the same as the investment groups will have seats on the corporation’s board of directors. “We’re backing the management team (already in place),” says Chris Perry, president of Continental, which is a subsidiary of BankAmerica Corp.

“They’re looking to us to grow the business—we’re the experts,” explains Scott Brickman. “They have connections that can open doors for us, which is good,” says Scott. “They have substantial financial analysis capabilities,” he adds. “But it’s really not going to change the way we do business.”

—by James E. Guyette
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So don't let grubs control your grounds, or your schedule. Depend on MACH 2™ Turf Insecticide. It's all you need to prevent or cure.

For more information or for the distributor nearest you, call 1-888-764-6432.
Herbicide resistance confirmed in *Poa annua*

ANAHEIM, CALIF.—Herbicide resistance has been identified in some weeds in some locations but there's no need for concern just yet, said Dr. Fred Yelverton at North Carolina State University.

“Tody say this is going to be a tremendous problem, but we're see-

*Poa annua* in non-overseeded bermudagrass fairways of southern golf courses. Yelverton said that in the four locations that he’s investigated, simazine was used continuously for seven years or more for Poa control.

“Herbicides do not cause genetic changes in the plant that lead to resistance,” stressed Yelverton. “It's nothing but a selection pressure that goes on over time. You're selecting for that wild-type plant that is out there in that population.”

There are also reports of particular areas of goosegrass and crabgrass that are suspected of being resistant to particular herbicides, he added.

Yelverton said that turfgrass managers can delay herbicide resistance in weeds by rotating herbicides. He said products like Ronstar or Barricade can also effectively control annual bluegrass.

He also touched on annual bluegrass control in bermudagrass overseeded with perennial rye. Initial findings suggest that turfgrass managers can control Poa, without damaging the rye seedlings, with either Ronstar or Balan about eight weeks prior to overseed. The rates still need to be worked out though, he said.

Yelverton reported on herbicide-resistant *Poa* at Rhône-Poulenc press conference.

LESCO builds NE presence

CLEVELAND, OHIO—LESCO, Inc., is increasing its presence in the Northeast by acquiring the specific assets of two privately owned companies—Agriturf, Inc., in Hatfield, Mass., and Cadwell & Jones, in Manchester, Conn. Lesco said it’s acquiring the professional turf care segments of the two businesses, including lawn and golf course turf maintenance. Terms of the all-cash transactions were not disclosed.

These transactions will provide Lesco with its first New England manufacturing facility. The Cleveland-based company plans to consolidate its new business operations in Hatfield, where it will acquire 11.8 acres of land, including Agriturf's fertilizer blending plant and a warehouse for distribution.

LESCO expects the consolidation to be complete by the time the 1998 season starts. In the longer term, the Hatfield facilities will be expanded, it reported.

Seed demand up after El Niño?

Wet weather conditions across the US this winter may cause increased demand for turfgrass seed, as landscapers, lawn care professionals and golf course superintendents begin to assess their needs.

The windy, rainy weather that accompanies the El Niño warming pattern could affect American's turf and gardens, reports Pennington Seed. Strong storms can cause landscape problems such as flooding, broken tree limbs and erosion. Plants may become waterlogged, topsoil and hillsides have been washed away in parts of California and trees can fall.

“The greatest effect of El Niño this past year has undoubtedly been in the Northeast,” says Ronnie Stapp, senior vice president of Pennington's Seed Division.

“I would expect that the ice storms will result in a need for overseeding, because ice is the most devastating element to turf and gardens.”
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Conserve. The end of the line for insect pests.
Turf and ornamental professionals know it takes a unique combination of nature and nurture to create a beautiful landscape. Now, a new spinosyn chemical class offers a pest management tool derived from a naturally occurring organism for their IPM programs. It's an innovation pairing high efficacy with a profile that can save time, money and environmental concern.

Known as Conserve* SC (suspension concentrate) turf and ornamental insect control, this tool offers quick and effective control of a wide variety of tough insect pests, including sod webworms, cutworms, armyworms, and ornamental pests like leafminers and thrips.

Derived from the fermentation of a naturally occurring organism, Conserve offers rapid control at very low rates. Plant damage ceases immediately, and control is evident in one to three days.

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- A "Caution" signal word, indicating reduced risk.
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Conserve can also be used without worry about phytotoxicity on all turfgrasses and most ornamentals.

Conserve should be applied when insect pests are young and vulnerable — just prior to the point of turf or ornamental damage. When pests are exposed to it through ingestion or contact, it acts on their nervous system's nicotinic acetylcholine receptors, stops their feeding on plant materials and quickly eliminates them.

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For more information about Conserve, contact your Dow AgroSciences representative or the Customer Information Center at 1.800.255.3726.

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