

A LESSON IN BUYING

No one wants to waste money, but there are a lot of easy ways to spend it. If you don't want to waste it, know what you're buying.

New products are often the culprits, and they appear on the market in a steady stream. Fortunately most have real merit and can do a good job; however, many are of questionable value or grossly overpriced, or both.

Often products are sold by enthusiastic salesmen using "scientific-sounding" sales pitches and promising benefits never before available. Everyone would like to get something for little or nothing, and it is only natural to hope that science will provide an easier and cheaper way of solving our problems. Promoters capitalize on these hopes of ours.

Many products are seldom entirely worthless but are usually worth little in relation to their cost. Often these carry enormous price mark-ups to pay for extensive sales campaigns, and rarely do the materials turn out to be a profitable investment with occasional detrimental effects.

But how can a superintendent decide what products are good? Examples of claims that would certainly make me dubious and hesitant in buying include:

Secret or unknown ingredients possessing almost magical benefits.

Based on "newly discovered" principle, or one involving a "new approach" to soil chemistry, to physical conditioning of soil, or to fertilizing.

Results produced through mysterious forces such as catalytic action, nutrient release, micro-organism activation, or some such vague description.

Ahead of the times and agronomists or other reliable sources haven't had time to evaluate them.

Numerous beneficial side effects—doubtful if anyone could prove these side effects exist.

Supported by unsolicited testimonials—these are no more than personal opinions.

Recommend using it in combination with good management practices which, by themselves, may eliminate the problem.

Don't need to use as much of this product as compared with another having same active ingredient because of new formulation and other principles. In reality the per unit price of active ingredient in the new product may be much more to get same results.

Furthermore, I would be cautious of salesmen especially those new to the area who are introducing products through higher than usual discounts plus an assortment of gifts for quantity purchases. Often these products are sold below cost as a means of

penetrating an area, and by concentrating on better golf courses the reputable and unsuspecting superintendent has indirectly endorsed a new unproven product which may have little or no value. Now the salesman has "broken the ice" and his products will undoubtedly penetrate the area, especially during dormant season before any actual testing or evaluating can occur.

In conclusion, if you try a new product, buy only enough to treat a small area. Compare the results with an adjacent plot of equal size which received no treatment but having identical operations and conditions. Now make a confident decision as to whether the product has merit.

Clyde Hamilton
Bob O'Link Golf Club
Highland Park, Illinois

ASPHALT DRIVEWAYS — PARKING LOTS — ETC.

"Golf Course Work a Specialty"

LEMONT PAVING CO.

SAND & STONE

115th & Archer Ave. (Rt. 171) — Lemont, Illinois

RAY MURPHY

257-6701

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

November 28, 1973

Dear Ray,

I figure it is about time I wrote you a note for the Bull Sheet.

Fall has been good to me at Pinecrest in regards to work. We have been able to accomplish quite a bit of work. We drained a lot of traps using the 2" perforated plastic drainage pipe and also casual water areas around the course. We tied the 2" into existing drain tile, plus we laid 4" thru 12" tile.

This golf course used to be one of five farms owned by the Conley clan in Huntley. The Conleys also owned a tile manufacturing company, consequently the entire 160 acres is just completely and thoroughly tiled. I have located and mapped at least 15 different tile lines, sizes from 3" to 14" in diameter, and all of them are working. Due to some poor construction during the building of the course we had quite a bit of additional drainage work to do. Following is a partial list of drainage work accomplished this year:

4,000' of 2" perforated

989' of 4" clay

1,200' of 12" cement

We plan another 800' of 10" next spring and that should make the course playable after 3" to 4" rain—which is what the owner wants.

We also built four cart paths totaling 870' during the summer between our regular work. This fall we also managed to plant fifty 5" scotch pine, fifty hybrid 2½" poplars and twenty-one 6" B&B Norway maples. Boy, were those maples back-breakers.

Here it is the 29th of November and we still are working out on the course, and hoping to get a couple more weeks out on the course. We have to snow fence some greens to prevent desiccation through the winter (our course is wide open) and finish top dressing 8 greens.

Hope this letter finds you in good health and may the Lord be with you and yours.

Golfingly yours,
Jack R. Hanson

F. D. CLAVEY RAVINIA NURSERIES, INC.

Roy F. Clavey, Pres.

Established 1885

TREES SHRUBS EVERGREENS

Introducers of

CLAVEY'S DWARF HONEYSUCKLE

BEVERLY FLOWERING CRAB

Rte. 2, Box 582, U.S. 45 & Knowles Rd.

Lake Villa, Illinois

312 — 223-8616