



The Grass Roots of Huber Ranch Sod Nursery, Inc.

In 1929, three brothers formed a trucking company with a silver cup contract to haul bread from Louisville to Chicago. What happened after that was a natural chain of events which led up to 1934 when Wm. C. Huber moved to Chicago to get that part of the Huber & Huber Motor Express operation straightened out before he moved back to Kentucky. In the following years, he said many times that he never could get it straightened out the way he wanted to though he had worked 7 days a week to accomplish it.

In the late forties, Huber & Huber Motor Express had grown to the 20th largest truckline in the country. In order to get away from the trucking business for a short time each week he purchased 1/2 of a farm in Schneider, Indiana at a public auction. Later

on that week he decided that he must have the other 1/2 of the farm in order to start toward his goal of a beautiful cattle farm. Through a great deal of bargaining and an extra \$100/acre he was able to put the 850 acre operation back together again. After much traveling and bartering he was able to put together the nucleus of a registered, white-faced, polled Hereford herd which was to achieve 2 National Champions within the next 6 years after his death in 1985, with the assistance of his son, Harold Huber, and an able manager.

By 1964, Harold had moved to Louisville to help with the complexities of Huber & Huber Motor Express which resulted in its sale that year. Since Harold and his family decided to stay in Kentucky after the truck line's sale, Wm. J. Huber decided to take over the farm after the cattle were sold if he could find its best possible use. With the help of Dr. Wm. H. Daniel of Purdue University, they determined that its best use would be a sod farm because of its level sandy loam mineral soil and its ample water supply. Leaving the trucking business allowed Bill to take over the operation and convert it slowly into a full fledged sod operation. The farm was Bill's father's dream and so in his honor, the new operation was called Huber Ranch Sod Nursery. The first turf was seeded in the fall of 1965. The first sales occurred in the spring of 1967 using Ryan sod cutters, and loading everything by hand.

While sod production was progressing, in order to meet cash flow, Bill put together a 500 head feedlot cattle operation and a thousand head hog finishing operation. As the sod operation grew, the cattle feeding seemed to be the first part of the operation that should go. In 1972, the feed lots came out and the silos came down. The hog operation was profitable and continued on until 1975, when the company turned to distribution of garden center supplies as the diversification end of the business.

In 1981, Huber Ranch Sod Nursery started growing creeping bent sod because the soil is ideal for use on greens. The soil's main features include: 75% black sand, 5 - 9% organic materials, and high porosity. It allows air and water to move freely through the soil after transplanting. It also allows water and fertilizer to move rapidly to the root zone to establish the sod quickly.

Since moving into the creeping bent sod market, Huber Ranch has taken on a complete line of complimentary items such as chemicals, grass seed, hydro mulch, greens covers, golf course equipment and mowers. Now, in its 20th year, the entire farm is in bluegrass sod production except the acreage in Penncross and Penneagle bent sod. The third generation, namely John and Jim Huber, insure that we are here to stay. Since the farm is in full production, the entire organization is concentrating on better and better service to its customers.

Systemic Fungicides and Plant Growth Regulation

by Randall T. Kane - CDGA Turf Advisor

In recent years, several systemic fungicides have been developed which control a wide range of turf diseases including the "new" patch diseases. Many of these compounds are toxic to fungi because they inhibit the enzymes involved in sterol biosynthesis - an important point that I will come back to later. Fungicides of particular interest to turf managers are Elanco's Rubigan and Mobay's Bayleton. These fungicides are active at relatively low application rates, are absorbed and translocated by plant roots, and have long term residual activity. Another interesting aspect of these products is their ability to cause visible changes in the color and growth habit of treated turfs. Growth effects observed in the field include dark green to blue green leaf coloration, increased stand densities, and reduced leaf growth. These responses are not observed consistently however, and many questions remain as to the factors controlling expression of growth regulating activity. (cont'd. page 18)



Clump River Birch
[Betula Nigra]
Specimen Quality
3 and 4 clump stems

Deerpath Road Batavia, IL 60510 312/879-0120
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TENNIS COURTS
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John Maniscalco 312/628-0500