

## Shade Problems?

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tration and air movement across the turf canopy; 2) raise turf mowing height to help counter-balance the detrimental effects of shade on rooting; 3) avoid excessive irrigation and maintain adequate drainage; 4) maintain satisfactory fertility; and 5) evade intensive traffic over heavily-shaded turf.

## Where Do We Go From Here?

Managing turf under shade presents challenges that are common to most all turf sites, including golf courses, lawns, and sports stadia. As a result, Michigan State University has made a long-term commitment to study management and physiological factors related to turfgrass growth in shade and, as a result, develop turfgrass germplasm that

is better adapted to shade conditions.

In order to launch our shade research project, the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation has committed funding for research equipment and construction of shade research facilities. In the first phase of our research, we will focus on strategies to grow creeping bentgrass in shade. Within this project, we plan to develop shade-tolerant creeping bentgrass via *in vitro* selection and somaclonal variation. Furthermore, we will evaluate the shade-tolerant species *Poa supina*, both as a model for shade tolerance and as a potential turfgrass species for use on golf courses in Michigan and abroad. *Poa supina* is a stoloniferous species native to the European Alps. Its desirable characteristics include tolerance of shade, low mowing heights, disease, and

wear. Its undesirable traits include a light green color and drought susceptibility due to a shallow root system. The shade project will complement the ongoing indoor sports turf research program at MSU.

So before you cut down that tree that took the span of our lifetime to grow, remember that MSU is looking for ways in which we may enjoy great trees alongside great turf. ■



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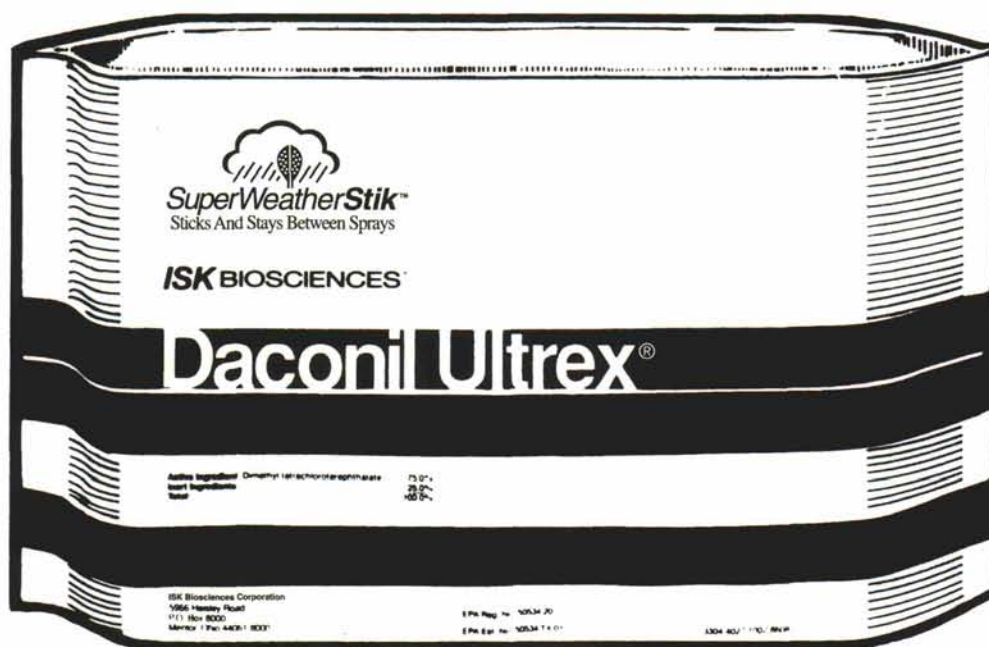
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