

IFAS TURF UPDATE AND FIELD DAY

By CHARLES H. PEACOCK
Extension Turf Specialist, IFAS

The University of Florida was host to 350 people in Gainesville who came to the Institute of Food and Agricultural Science (IFAS) Turf Update and Field Day, May 18. Turf industry people representing sod production, professional lawn care, golf course maintenance, parks and recreation departments, and county extension programs attended the two part program to update them on current turf research and recommendations in IFAS.

Opening remarks by Dr. Ken Tefertiller, Vice-President for Agricultural Arrairs, pointed out the sizeable contribution turf industries make within the state. Dr. Tefertiller stressed the need for IFAS to continue its program in turfgrass science through the 1980's. The morning session was designated as an update from personnel involved in the turf program at the university. Dr. Ed Freeman, currently state turf coordinator, opened the session with an overview of the IFAS turf program. He recognized three individuals in the audience that helped to pioneer the turf program, Dr. Roy Bair, Dr. G.C. Horn and Mr. Ralph White. Dr. Freeman noted that the program in Florida is sizeable and that a new comprehensive technical report on turfgrass research is being published for release shortly. Dr. A.E. Dudeck followed to report on several recently completed projects, including "Effects of sodium chloride on eight bermudagrass cultivars" and the use of "Temporary grasses and mulch for warm season turfgrass establishment." The turf extension program was reviewed by Dr. Charles Peacock who stressed the need to continue to work with the professional organizations and provide area wide programs for the industry through county extension personnel.

Dr. Phil Busey, Turf Breeder from the Agricultural Research and Education Center (AREC) at Ft. Lauderdale outlined his recent work and focused on the direction and productivity necessary from his breeding program. He stressed the need to keep Florida turfgrass needs current with improved cultivars for our unique environment. Dr. Don Short updated control recommendations on turf insects and in the absence of Dr. Jim Reinert discussed mole cricket control research. Weed control recommendations and research were reviewed by Dr. Wayne Currey and Dr. Charlie Tarjan reported on current nematode projects. Finishing up the morning session, Dr. Mike Davis from the AREC at Ft. Lauderdale reported his finding relating to the bermudagrass decline problem on golf course turf in South Florida.

The afternoon tour of the Turf Field Laboratory involved Drs. Jerry Sartain, Charles Peacock, A.E. Dudeck, Don Short, Ed Freeman, Charlie Tarjan, and Wayne Currey. Thirty-five stations were available for observation of experiments and the researchers discussed findings in various detail at most of these stops. Time was allowed and used by conferees for extensive discussion with researchers of projects. Experimental topics covered included turf fertility, weed control, renovation, sod quality, legume overseeding, shade tolerance, disease control, cultivar evaluation, nematode control herbicide application and saline irrigation studies. Plans are being formulated for an annual program in conjunction with a field day at the AREC Ft. Lauderdale for 1983 with long range plans for a field day alternating between Gainesville and Ft. Lauderdale on a yearly basis. ■

