

FGCSA Turf Research Update

For years the FGCSA has had a very active committee involved in bermudagrass research specific to golf courses. We have been involved with the University of Florida's Fort Lauderdale Research and Education facility and have supported our technician, Marcus Prevatte, who is responsible for upkeep of the bermuda observation plots.

Our yearly expenses for this operation range between \$25,000 and \$30,000 and we have enjoyed a great relationship with Dr. Monica Elliott, Dr. David Buchanan, Dr. John Cisar and all of the additional support personnel at the experiment station.

The funding for this project has predominantly come from the following sources

1. Proceeds from the Turf Expo sponsored by the South Florida GCSA.
2. Various donations by other FGCSA chapters.
3. Proceeds from fund raising golf tournaments.
4. Donations of cash or materials from companies.
5. Revenue from rebate programs like CIBA, GASH, Valent and Dow Elanco.

This year we have added the involvement of the Florida State Golf Association which promotes amateur golf and golf related services.

The financial philosophy of the committee has been focused around two goals which are to keep a year's worth of operating expense in reserve and encourage participation from companies if we are involved with product evaluation.

Another goal has been to keep a core group of individuals intact and add people when the situation warrants or people with an interest. The benefits of this program have been tremendous but there comes a time for change within the committee and a reevaluation of our state-wide programs.

Starting in the Fall of 1996, we have combined a majority of the individuals from the FGCSA Research Committee into the FTGA Awards (Research) Committee. They will still be two separate bodies, but there will now be a strong emphasis on continuity as we enter a new era of cooperation with the University and the turf industry.

With the advent of the Envirotron in Gainesville and the new research facility in Milton, Florida, we will be called upon to assist these new programs. As part of this new-found enthusiasm for turf throughout the state, the FTGA has begun working with IFAS to encourage hiring an overall turfgrass coordinator who can better serve the industry and the University.

Speaking as an 18-year volunteer, this kind of coordination should enable our industry to gain more valuable information with a lot less confusion. Funding the right individual will not be an easy task. In the meantime, Dr. Jerry Sartain will be working with the FTGA and the FGCSA to implement this cooperation between the associations.

The following is a suggested time frame for reviewing industry needs:

December— Committee meets with coordinator to discuss research needs and industry problems.

January— Requests for proposals are distributed to the University Experiment Station. Budget amounts are set by the committee.

February— Proposals are submitted and in turn distributed to committee members.

March— One day proposal review meeting. Proposal presentations by researchers. Breakout

meetings. Awards committee convenes for discussion and final decisions. Researchers meet with coordinator to discuss concerns. Discussions and approvals. Group discusses approved projects and ones that need further work for re-submission next year.

July — Experiment station to provide executive summary of ongoing projects and mail to committee members.

August or September — Researcher presentations at initial session of annual FTGA Conference.

We don't have all the answers, but at least a good first effort is being implemented to improve the current situation. One hurdle we will still need to cross is the industry requests for more product evaluation and how this fits into the University format.

Please give me a call for questions or comments.

K. D. Downing
FGCSA Research Committee Chairman

Editor's Note: Congratulations are in order! Kevin Downing was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Florida State Golf Association. With this organization also involved in funding turfgrass research via the Cal Korf Turfgrass Research Program we now have strong representation in all major turf research efforts in the state.