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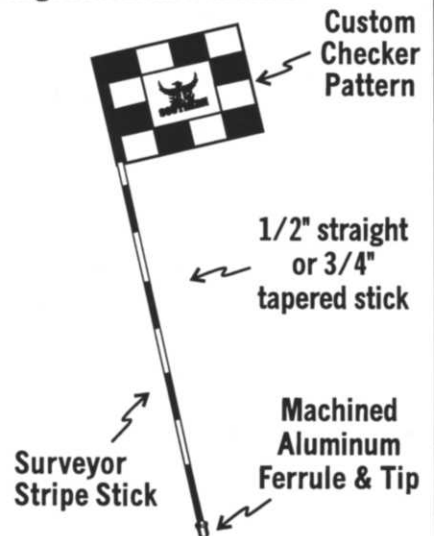
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*In-depth one- and two-day seminars with CEU examinations are college-level courses presented by the GCSAA at regional and national conferences.*



*Whenever superintendents gather together at meetings or golf outings, the talk always turns to sharing ideas and solutions to problems... a surefire benefit to the individual and his club.*



*Trade shows offer a unique opportunity to do side-by-side comparisons of products and equipment... and maybe even save money by purchasing show specials.*

starting at your local chapter right up to the GCSAA Conference and Show.

This participation is beneficial to both the individual and the organization. I've seen meeting sites range from maintenance buildings to civic centers and from restaurant nooks to posh hotel conference rooms. I've heard speakers from local sales reps and superintendents to pro golfers, golf course architects and Ph. D.'s.

No matter what the setting or who the speaker, the important thing is that we learn something from the experience and we participate. If you go to a meeting thinking that you know it all, then you probably won't learn too much. Good input and conversation by superintendents can raise a meeting to new heights and benefit many.

#### ***Local Chapter Meetings.***

##### ***Meet Your Neighbors.***

##### ***Discuss Local Problems***

As a past president of a local chapter, I know the importance of good attendance, especially by superintendents. I am also a busy superintendent and father of four so I am aware of the demands on a busy person's time. Local meetings are a great place to exchange ideas and techniques with fellow turf managers.

They are also ideal spots to cultivate friendships with other superintendents and suppliers. Usually the local chapter meetings have speakers who address local, state or regional topics. Local meetings offer a perfect place to get a speaker that you may specifically want to hear.

Contact your local board members with all your speaker ideas. From past experience I know that a local or state education director is very receptive to and appreciative of any speaker leads that come their way. Good speakers are a real treat and an asset to all meetings.

Remember that usually it's just a handful of people that devote much of their own precious time to make the local meetings successful and informative. Poor attendance puts a bad taste in everyone's mouth. Especially the host superintendent who spends extra manhours and effort to present a perfect golf course to his peers.

I think that with most meetings that I have attended, the superintendent has the course in member-guest shape! Poor attendance is like a slap in the face to the

host! We are very fortunate that we get to play many fine well-groomed courses. Consider that most self-motivated people like to showcase their talents and product, and superintendents are perfect examples of such people.

This pride in product also carries over to the various clubhouse and professional staffs at each club. Please support your local meetings because you are also showing support and appreciation for your fellow superintendents.

Networking with your local turf managers and suppliers is the hidden and unadvertised benefit of attending the local meetings. Exchanging war stories is a great learning experience and acts as an informal support group for those tough times. Those who question the value of the time spent at a local meeting need to consider the value of learning a new idea or solution to an old problem.

A meeting discussion or just a conversation during lunch or golf may provide an idea that saves your club hundreds or even thousands of dollars. Or maybe, it may be an idea that just makes the course and you look better. If you have a com-

plaint about a meeting, more than likely, everyone will benefit if you offer your help or suggestions to correct it.

Finally, don't forget about the new guy. People complain that not enough superintendents attend their own meetings. This is often true and I would venture to say that poor attendance is most chapters' biggest problem.

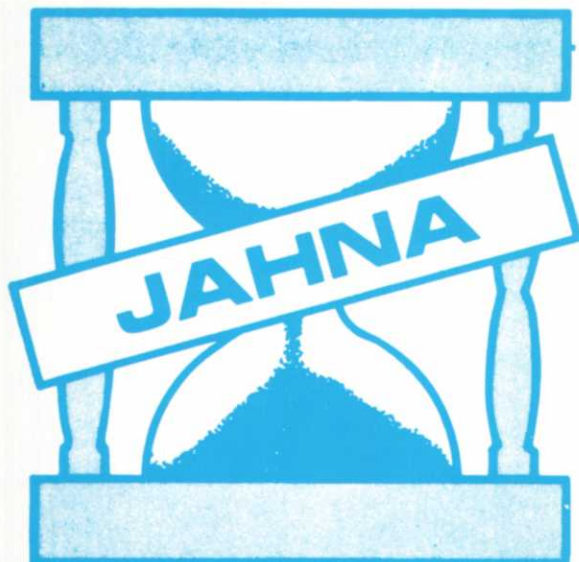
Bringing in new members and keeping them coming back until they feel comfortable is very important. If no one welcomes them to the group or talks to them, chances are they won't be back. Each and every member of a chapter is very important to the success of the whole association.

***The FTGA & GCSAA Conferences:  
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The big conventions and trade shows offer the superintendent a side variety of educational and hand-on opportunities. The trade shows are huge often offering everything from computerized golf cart location devices and weather radar to turf equipment and uniforms.

*Poor attendance puts a  
bad taste in everyone's  
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who spends extra  
manhours and effort to  
present a perfect golf  
course to his peers.*

The education is just as diverse ranging from twenty minute research updates to two-day long seminars and field trips. The FTGA and GCSAA spend much time and money to secure top quality educational programs usually in exciting locations.



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These larger conventions usually have many university level speakers and researchers who disseminate the latest information from their current projects. These sessions are usually open to all conference attendees and are grouped by general topics like "southern turf management" or "public golf."

I like that these presentations are only twenty to sixty minutes long so you can see and hear a lot of information in a morning or afternoon session and even talk to the speaker. Since everyone attending these sessions is looking for answers to similar problems the possibility of discussion and idea exchange is very high.

The other type of education at these conferences is specific in-depth one or two-day seminars. These are usually very specific in nature. They are taught in a classroom setting by experts in that particular field. Many of these classes that I have attended are of college level quality.

There is usually a separate charge for these seminars, and in the case of the GCSAA Conference you had better make

your reservations early or they may be sold out.

You always receive supplemental printed matter and course syllabus that can be used for future reference.

Certified superintendents can earn continuing education credits by taking an examination at the end of the GCSAA classes.

Most conferences offer speakers who are motivational as in the case of GCSAA's opening night keynote speaker. Many of the speakers are not related directly to golf, but rather they deliver positive messages about overcoming obstacles, believing in yourself and being successful.

Their role is to get the convention off on a positive note.

The FTGA & GCSAA have done excellent jobs of getting top notch panels to discuss timely topics such as environmental relations and product comparisons.

The GCSAA has brought in national politicians, famous media personalities and top level environmentalist to sit on these various panels.

This year's Environmental General Session on February 8th looks very interesting.

Then there is the Trade Show. The show of shows. The perfect opportunity to see the latest in turf technology and sometimes non-turf technology. I have seen everything from electric triplex greensmowers to chairs with built-in back massagers.

There are two things you need to remember when attending a trade show.

First, wear comfortable shoes for the ten-mile walk you will take.

Second, remember that you are wearing a name tag and that salesman shaking our hand is not your long lost childhood friend but rather a professional at marketing who can read your name tag.

That's part of your education too!

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*by Mike Hamilton, CGCS  
Grey Oaks Country Club*

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fect his or her skills. No one gets better at anything unless they are educated by some means, either by being taught in some fashion or through experience.

I am a very strong believer in the philosophy that most people have to be taught how to learn, and taught how to succeed.

If you ask the superintendents with the most prestigious jobs how they got to where they are, I would bet a very large percentage would tell you they had great teachers. The most noticeable characteristic of most all of these superintendents is that they themselves are great educators and they preach professionalism.

Our industry has grown tremendously in the past 50 years in both respect and compensation for the superintendent. The people in the industry most responsible for that growth have been those who are great educators and who act professionally. One problem we have as an industry is that the percentage of these leaders is not as high as it could be.

Can you imagine how much money all of us would make and how good our jobs would be if 100% of our superinten-

dents shared these same characteristics? I truly believe those characteristics can be taught to most people! Therefore, it is our responsibility to our profession to educate our people, especially the youth.

When I was in high school, I was not a joiner. Although I was involved in athletics, I was not involved in any clubs or other extra curricular activities.

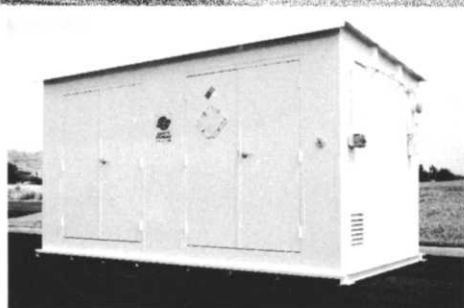
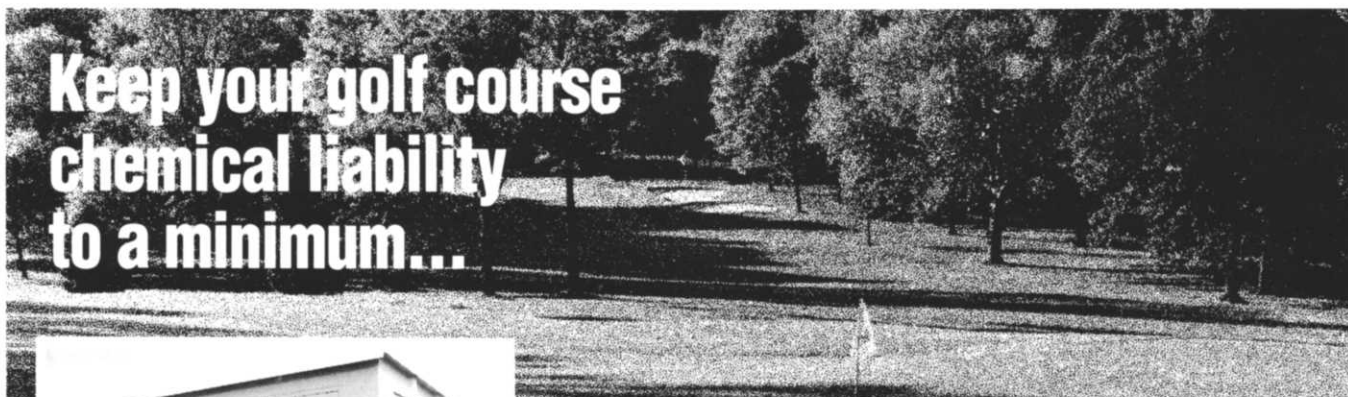
I was not into education. My grades bordered on failure. I was on the road to mediocrity. I believe the reason was because I was never taught how to succeed.

I started working on a golf course in my sophomore year in high school. When I began showing signs that I had an interest in the industry, the superintendent started taking me to meetings and teaching me as much as he could. He encouraged me to further my education with college, and he constantly preached to me about a professional image.

If it were not for that man, I would not be where I am today.

Because of the tutelage I received when I was young, and the fact that I was allowed to attend meetings, it has always been second nature for me to continually

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The dedication of the Envirotron, a turf research facility at the University of Florida, is but one example of superintendents partnering with industry to fund research that will help educate themselves and other turf managers in more effective and efficient methods.



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educate myself and my staff. I also feel it is my responsibility to get involved in helping to build our professional image.

Yes, it is a lot of extra work, but it is a payback to a profession that has rewarded me and my family tremendously. If I had not had that professionalism influence when I was young, I'm sure I would have fallen into my old natural pattern on not getting involved.

If any of my efforts have helped any association I was in, even in a small way, wouldn't have been a shame if I had never participated?

I start by letting the employee do every job on the golf course for a certain period of time. That period is dependent on how long they plan to be with me.

I let them spend a little more time on the specialty positions like spray tech, irrigation tech, service tech and administrative assistant. I even let them act as the assistant superintendent for a week.

During the time they are with me, I require them to read turfgrass books and take tests on the materials they read. I take the technical information and relate

it to the practical applications on the course.

I also let them attend at least one superintendent's meeting while they are with me. After that meeting while the experience is fresh in their minds, they get my involvement and professionalism speech. In the last few weeks of training, I help them prepare a resume.

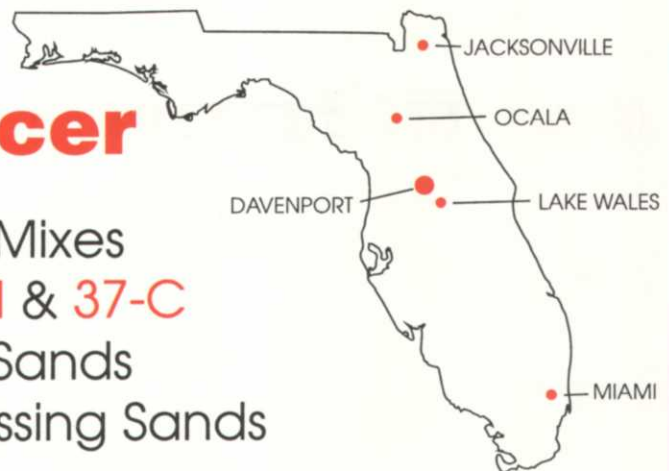
I then interview them. If the person does not interview well, I make suggestions and interview them again and again if necessary. After I feel they interview well, I will then negotiate with them. Again I do it until I feel they have learned good negotiating skills. The final process is for the students to critique the training program, so I can see where improvements can be made.

Many of you may think this kind of a training program is too much work or a waste of time. I don't. I have seen some very positive results. I believe that if I can help one person the way I was helped, and they become a fellow crusader to raise our professional standards, then the time I spent was well worth it!

*Yes, it is a lot of extra work, but it is a payback to a profession that has rewarded me and my family tremendously. If I had not had that professionalism influence when I was young, I'm sure I would have fallen into my old natural pattern on not getting involved.*

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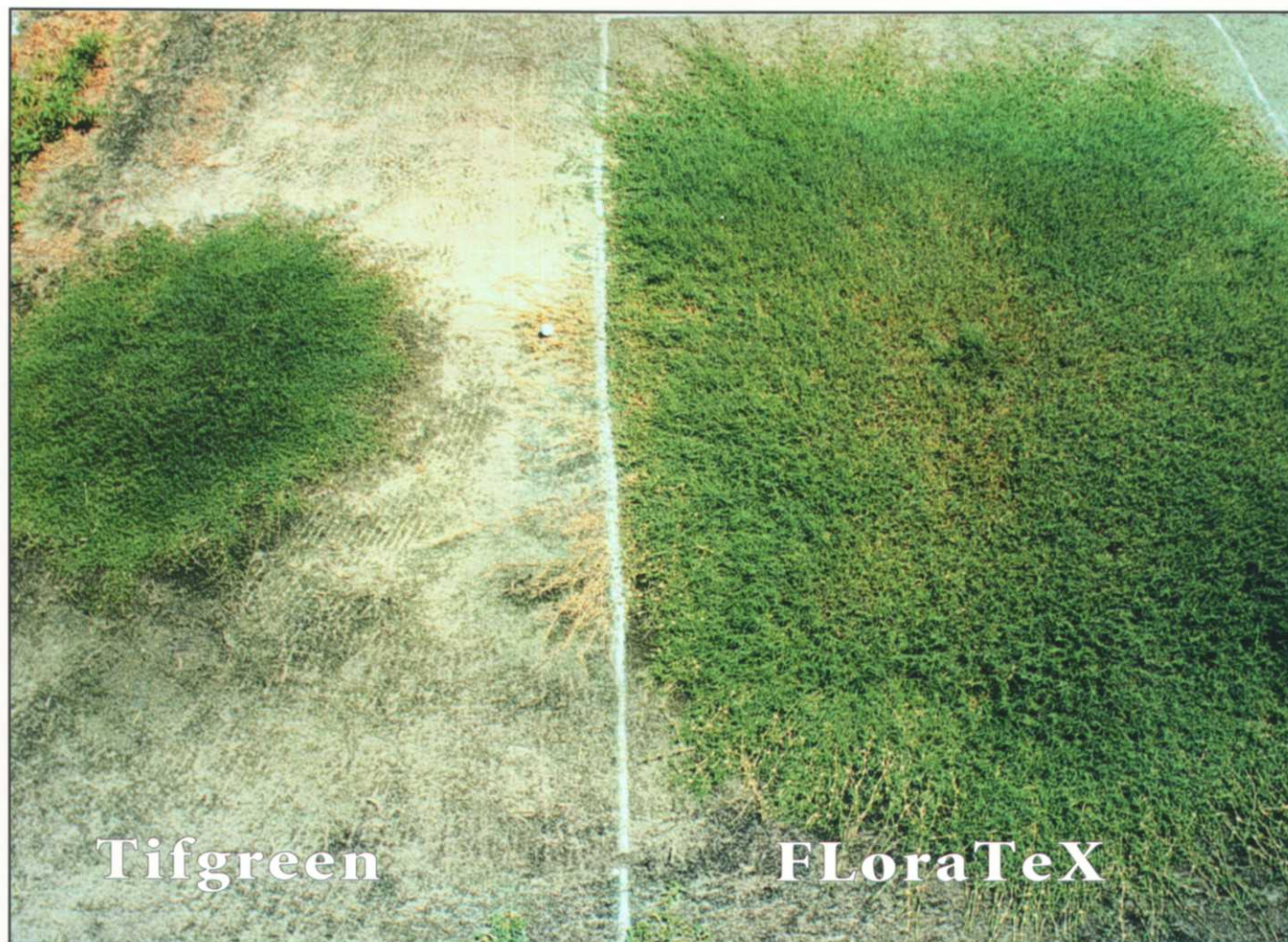


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**Figure 4.** Establishment rate of FLoraTeX bermudagrass (90% cover on right) was 10 times greater than that of Tifgreen bermudagrass (9% cover on left). Plots are two months old after being established from a single 6-inch pot that was planted in center of each 9x14.5-foot plot. Fertilization rate was 0.5 pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet per week.

## Seedheads and nitrogen response on FLoraTeX bermudagrass

BY A. E. DUDECK  
*University of Florida*

**F**loraTeX® bermudagrass was jointly released in 1992 by the Florida and Texas Agricultural Experiment Stations. FLoraTeX™ is a low maintenance bermudagrass for cemeteries, golf courses, lawns, parks, roadsides, and sports turfs in warm-humid and warm-semiarid climatic regions of the United States. Its merits and limitations are summarized as follows:

### Merits

- Widely adapted and produces acceptable turf quality throughout the warm-humid and warm-semiarid regions of the southern United States especially under low maintenance inputs.
- Widely adapted to soil pH especially on alkaline soils.
- Very low nitrogen requirements due to superior nitrogen stress tolerance.
- Excellent drought resistance and dehydration avoidance.
- Superior rooting depth and mass.
- Excellent fall low temperature color retention.
- Very early spring greenup.
- Good wear tolerance similar to Tifgreen and Arizona Common.
- Resistant to bermudagrass stunt mite.
- Tolerant to the short winged mole cricket.
- Tolerant to lance and spiral nematodes.
- Least affected by dollar spot under low nitrogen stress.
- Can be identified by its starch gel electrophoresis banding pattern aconitase.



## Limitations

- Prolific seedhead producer at certain times of the year.
- Produces viable seed which may contaminate turf with off types.
- Must be vegetatively propagated by plugs, sod, or sprigs.
- Lacks cold hardiness.
- Poor shade adaptation which is a characteristic of all bermudagrass cultivars.

These characteristics should make it ideally suited for golf course fairways and roughs, yet Florida golf course superintendents have shown little interest in this new cultivar. Many have expressed concern about its seedhead problem and its unknown response to *high* rather than *low* nitrogen fertilization. Are these legitimate concerns? Indeed they are. Additional discussion on both issues may, perhaps, minimize some of these concerns.

## Seedheads

FloraTeX® does indeed produce seedheads, especially in May and June of most years, and if pollinated with a different pollen source, FloraTeX® will set viable seed. It should be emphasized that appearance of seedheads does not imply concurrent viable seed! It normally takes two to three weeks *after* pollination for viable seed maturation. Hence seedhead production in FloraTeX® may be controlled - not eliminated - with timely mowing.

In other grasses, it is known that nitrogen fertilizer stimulates vegetative growth and concurrently suppresses reproductive growth. During the 1994 growing season at Gainesville, FL, supplemental nitrogen was applied to FLoraTeX® at rates of 0, 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, or 1.0 pounds per 1000 square feet on monthly intervals. FloraTeX® was responsive to nitrogen fertilization (Fig. 1). Turf quality increased 57% at a rate of 2.7 times per unit of nitrogen from a turf quality score of 5.1 on plots receiving no supplemental nitrogen up to a maximum turf quality score of 8.0 at the highest nitrogen rate of one pound per 1000 square feet per growing month (Fig. 2). Concurrently, seedheads decreased 65% from 66 seedheads per square foot to a low of 23 seedheads per square foot on plots receiving 0 or 1.0 pound of nitrogen

per 1000 square feet per growing month, respectively. High rates of nitrogen are not recommended as a control measure for seedheads in this grass, but rather, application of nitrogen fertilizer should be timed with maximum seedhead production which is in May or June.

Considerable effort by various seed companies is currently being devoted to development of seed-propagated bermudagrass cultivars. We presently have seeded bermudagrasses under test at Gainesville, Fla. After two years of study, the Sundance cultivar marketed by Lesco, Inc., had turf quality equal to that of Tifgreen and Tifway bermudagrass. If the golf course superin-

tendent of today is interested in the new grasses for tomorrow, improved seed-propagated bermudagrass cultivars are just on the horizon. In this light, as long as the wind blows and birds fly, we will always have a potential problem of viable seed contamination in our bermudagrass turfs.

## Nitrogen Response

As illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, FloraTeX® bermudagrass was very responsive to supplemental nitrogen fertilization. This is further illustrated in Figure 3. As expected, at low rates of nitrogen fertilization, FloraTeX® was superior to Tifway bermudagrass in turf

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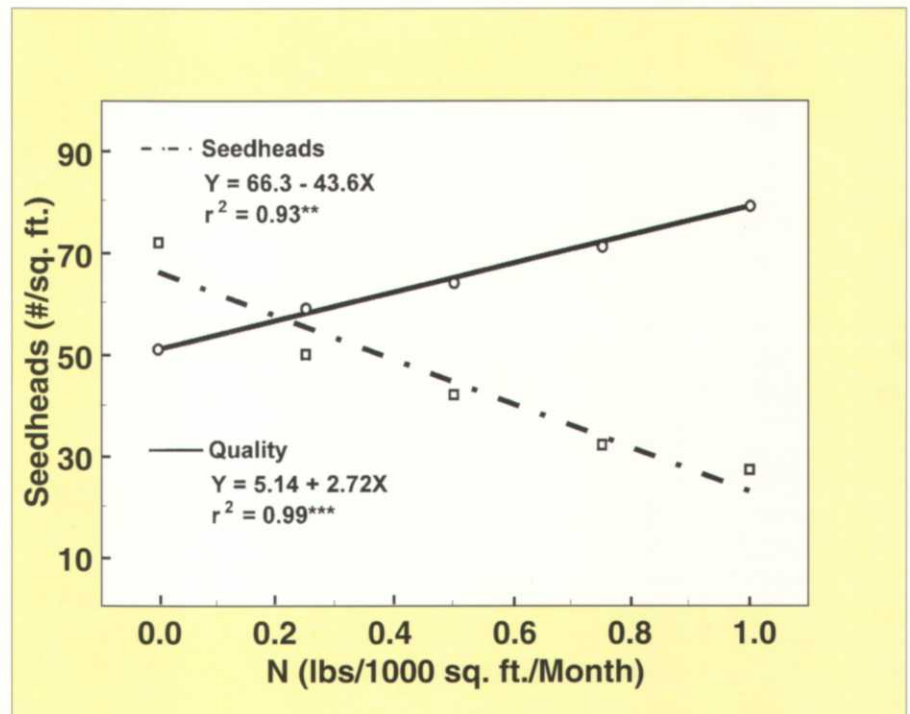


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**Figure 1.** Response of FloraTeX bermudagrass to monthly applications of supplemental nitrogen on seedhead suppression and turf quality. Plot on left received 1.0 pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet per month from ammonium sulfate compared to center plot which received no supplemental fertilization.

quality. At high rates of nitrogen fertilization, Tifway bermudagrass produced a maximum turf quality score of 8.0 at a nitrogen rate of 0.9 pounds per 1000 square feet and then *declined!* On the other hand, turf quality scores in FloraTeX® increased 1.03 per unit of nitrogen application to its maximum turf quality score of 8.0 at a nitrogen rate of 1.0 pound per 1000 square feet, yet, turf quality scores *continued to increase!* What this actually means is that Tifway bermudagrass is much more nitrogen dependent than FloraTeX®, especially at low nitrogen nutrition. FloraTeX®, when fertilized according to our recommendation with a single application of one pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet in the spring and no additional supplemental nitrogen throughout the growing season, had a turf quality score of 7.0 out of a possible score of 9.0; whereas, Tifway bermudagrass required 0.5 pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet per growing month to produce turf of equal quality. Stated another way, Tifway bermudagrass required 3.0 pounds of nitrogen per 1000



**Figure 2.** Seasonal average influence of monthly applications of supplemental nitrogen on seedhead suppression and turf quality of FloraTeX bermudagrass at Gainesville, Fla. in 1994.