

turfgrass in general as if they are trivial or frivolous. These concerns have merit, considering international exceptions have been made for cut flowers and golf course development in other countries. Contrary to common belief, golf is not "just" a rich man's game or "elitist pastime." Well over 70 percent of golf courses in the U. S. are public access venues.

We were told by members of EPA in a meeting last year that "political pressure" at the international level is the main obstacle to overcome in terms of the golf CUE. Essentially other countries do not see the value in using MeBr for golf courses or grass in general. Those... pressures... should be dealt with in the proper forum.

Those "opinions" are not part of the Montreal Protocol, which specifically created critical use exemptions to help support industries until such time as viable alternatives could be found.

We also do not understand why

the agency makes additional cuts to production and reserves beyond the levels called for in the treaty.

By making deeper than necessary cuts to supplies, golf will likely be squeezed out when allocations are made. We understand food production and safety are number one, but why isn't the EPA actively supporting our own national interests?

...Owning and operating a golf course is a business that competes for and serves millions of customers. We deserve some consideration.

We annually support ongoing research to produce new grasses that require less water, fertilizer and pesticide inputs. Trying to breed, produce and install these grasses without access to a fair and reasonable amount of MeBr to insure their success without using increased amounts of conventional pesticides or more questionable alternatives is counter productive for the environment and the industry.

Other background information on Methyl Bromide can be found at the following Web sites:

<http://methyl-bromide.com/faq/plenty-of-skepticism-remains-about-the-phase-out-of-methyl-bromide/>

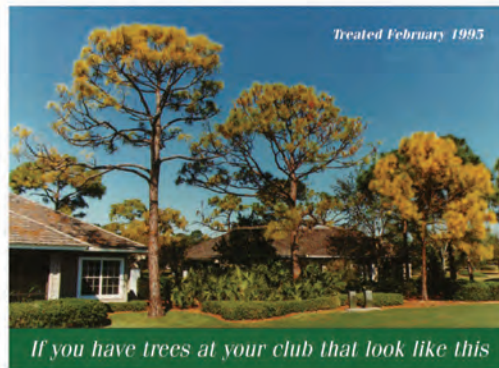
<http://methylbromide.typepad.com/>

<http://www.methyl-bromide.com>

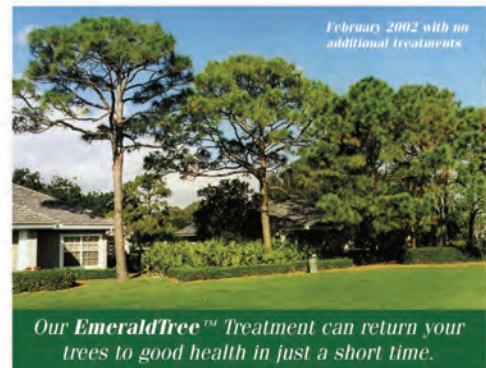
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Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force

# Let the Science Begin

By Joel Jackson

The Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force was created by the 2007 Florida Legislature to address several issues beginning with phosphorus loading in Lake Okeechobee and eventually expanding to include nitrogen and all watersheds and basins in the state.

The clean-up of Lake Okeechobee began with addressing agricultural uses of fertilizers but quickly spread to addressing urban uses of fertilizer including residential and commercial lawns, sports fields and golf courses. The rule deals primarily with the amount of phosphorus (P) and nitrogen (N) that can be formulated and put into containers of fertilizer products weighing less than 49 pounds, also known as specialty products. The law does not regulate improper application of the products.

However, limitations have been placed on the amount of total P and N that can be applied per application and per year. Intensely managed sports and golf turf can use tissue- and soil-testing results to justify additional nutrient applications if needed. The golf industry is guided by the nutrient management recommendations contained in the newly published Golf Course BMP Manual.

Copies of the BMP manuals were sent to every golf course in the state. If you did not receive one contact the FGCSA at

407-248-1971 or FLGRN@aol.com.

As of Sept. 30, at least two local ordinances (Sanibel Island and Sarasota County) have cited the Golf BMP Manual recommendations as the guidelines that golf courses in their jurisdictions must follow regarding nutrient management. Both ordinances also ban the application of N and P during the “rainy season” which they each define with different dates. The state hopes that by drafting a standardized statewide rule based on science that local governments will use that rule to educate and guide homeowner use to help minimize any negative effects of residential fertilizer use.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

“The Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force, representing diverse stakeholder interests from around the state, will provide recommendations to the Florida Legislature to improve efficiency, effectiveness and consistency in Florida’s regulation and use of consumer fertilizers. The Task Force’s task will be to review, discuss and seek consensus (10 of 13 votes is agreed as consensus) on a package of recommendations to the Legislature for proposed refinements to Florida’s regulation and use of consumer fertilizers to ensure they are based on the very best available science and uniform(ly) subject to variations necessary to meet mandated state and

**Task Force Members and Representation**

Mayor Jay Arend, Florida League of Cities, Inc.

Sen. David Aronberg, Florida Senate  
Peter John Barile, Environmental Community

Jerry Brooks, Department of Environmental Protection

Richard Budell, DACS Office of Agricultural Water Policy

Casey Fitzgerald (Vice-chair), Water Management Districts

Richard Martinez, National Fertilizer Industry

Representative Bryan Nelson, Florida House of Representatives

Ron Olson, Florida-Based Fertilizer Industry

Andy Rackley (Chair), Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Jerry Sartain, UF Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences

Karen Taylor, Registered Landscape architect

Commissioner Jon Thaxton, Florida Association of Counties

**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDOACS) Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force Project Development and Delivery Schedule**

Nov. 2, 2007: Task Force Meeting 3 - West Palm Beach

Nov. 14, 2007: Task Force Meeting 4: Draft Recommendations Approval Public Workshops—Round One (Following Task Force Meeting) Tallahassee

Dec. 17, 2007: Task Force Meeting 5—Review of Public Comments Public Workshops—Round Two (Following Task Force Meeting) Apopka

Jan. 11, 2008: Task Force Meeting 6—Adoption of Final Package of Recommendations - Tallahassee

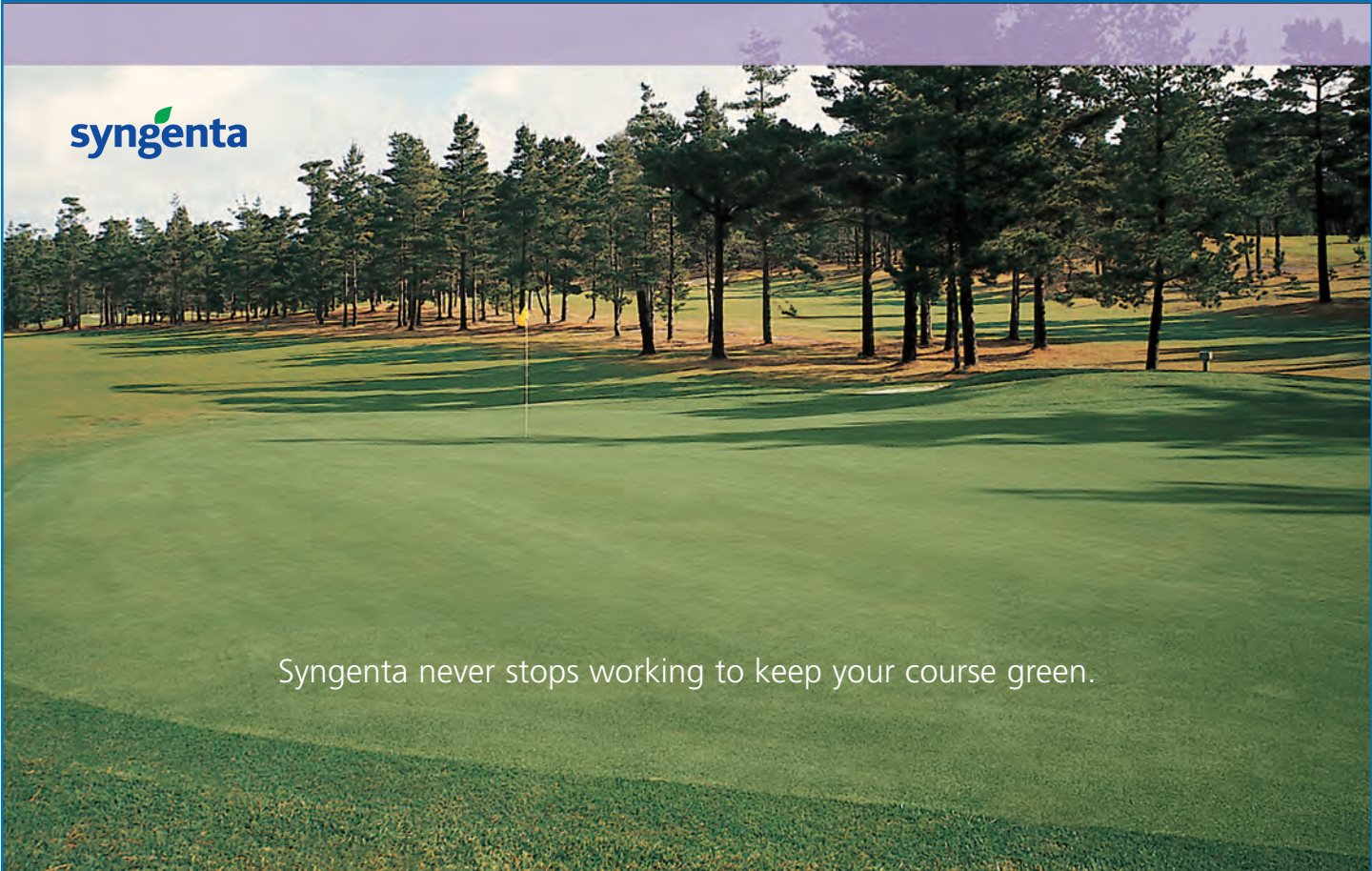
Jan. 15, 2008: Delivery of Final Recommendations to DACS and Florida Legislature

federal water quality standards.”

Here is the remaining meeting schedule for the Task Force. It would be a good idea for representatives of all green industries to attend one of these public meetings in their areas so they can monitor the progress and make appropriate comments.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** *I attended the first meeting in Sarasota and it was primarily to set up the process and ground rules for conducting the business of the Task Force. They elected Andy Rackley of FDOACS as chairman of the group and Casey Fitzgerald from the water management districts as vice chairman. While all members cited using best available science, several members of the group also were involved in local ordinances which ban the use of nitrogen and phosphorus during warm-season turf-growing (rainy) season. That ban is not based on science. It is based on intuition that if fertilizer is applied and it rains it automatically must run off. That’s why we need to stay involved.*





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ACSP CERTIFICATION

# What Does It Mean to You?

By Shelly Foy

I don't know how long I have been urging Florida golf course superintendents to join the Audubon International's Cooperative Sanctuary program. Now with the publishing and distribution of the Florida Golf Course BMP Manual the past few months, there are even more excellent reasons and motivation to join.

First, many of those BMPs were based on guidelines suggested by Audubon International. Second, several cities and counties have said that golf courses would be exempt from their local fertilizer ordinances if they followed the new BMPs. To follow the BMPs you need to have a plan. What better plan than the AI Cooperative Sanctuary Program to help you fill out the checklist in the back of the BMP manual?

If you are reading through Audubon International's Web sites ([www.auduboninternational.org](http://www.auduboninternational.org) or [www.golfandenvironment.org](http://www.golfandenvironment.org)), chances are you might run across this list of the "Top Ten Reasons to get Certified." I think there is a lot we can add to this list and I encourage you to do so by sending me an e-mail at [sfoy@usga.org](mailto:sfoy@usga.org).

**TOP TEN REASONS TO GET CERTIFIED**

- Do the right thing for the environment
- Enjoy a new and rewarding aspect of your job and be able to share it with others
- Gain positive publicity for your golf course
- Better organize and coordinate your environmental management efforts
- Track environmental improvements
- Save money through reduced resource use
- Build your skill set and your resume
- Promote your stewardship efforts
- Be recognized as a community and golf industry environmental leader
- Gain valuable feedback from Audubon International

It is plain as the nose on your face that environmental issues in general and concerning golf courses specifically aren't going away. You guys are always interested in citing peer-reviewed studies when arguing about environmental activists coming after golf courses. Well, here are some reviews from your peers about what the Cooperative Sanctuary has meant to them and their golf courses. Read what your peers have to say about the program. If you can't believe them, who will you believe?

*Your top ten reasons are right on the target. The only other one I can think of... Best and most practical program available to ensure highest standards of environmental stewardship in the Golf Industry... and of course Audubon International's track record speaks for itself. Bill Iwinski, PGA, Golf Course Manager, Ironwood Golf Course*

*Since we have become certified, it has heightened our awareness of everything around us. We now notice how rapidly our (wildlife) populations are increasing, such as osprey, blue heron, red fox and many other animals. We have reduced significantly our most toxic pesticides to near zero and always are looking for the safest methods available. Fred Klauk, Superintendent, TPC at Sawgrass, Ponte Vedra Beach*

*Water quality has greatly improved over the past year. Visually the lakes are no longer full of algae and weeds and the aquatic plants and wildlife are thriving.*

*Since my arrival here at Audubon CC, I have totally changed the way fertilizers and chemicals are used, especially around the lakes. Fertilizer is NO longer thrown into the lakes and chemicals are used as needed.*

*I have also started a bank naturalization plan which catches and filters any runoff going into the lakes. The golfers are also happy because this catches their golf balls. I plan to make*

*these areas wider in the future.*

*This project is its infant stage. I have had great response from the community on my efforts. I will continue to use BMPs to reduce costs and improve the environment. Ryan J. Costello, CGCS, Audubon Country Club, Naples*

*I believe the majority of our members are really interested in protecting our environment and participation in this program is one way to demonstrate this interest. Then there is the matter of community pride. It's kind of nice to have our little golf course appear in the same list containing the names of some of the most famous courses in the world.*

*In a broader sense, we need to be aware of the 'bad rap' that golf seems to be gaining; that we are the 'bad guys' polluting and destroying the environment without caring. Our participation in the ACSP along with that of so many other courses seems to provide a powerful message that this game, played and enjoyed by so many millions throughout the world, is, in fact, a responsible member of the world society. Jim Toth, Six Lakes Country Club*

*I don't think it's an option (to join the ACSP for Golf). What better way is there to showcase your environmental efforts and prove that golf and nature can be harmonious? Our efforts clearly show that golf cares about the environment. Scott Welder, Golf Course Superintendent, Walt Disney World*

*As we all know, golf course superintendents are environmentalists.*

*Being a member of Audubon International helps show our commitment to protecting the environment and providing habitat for Florida's wildlife. Robert R Bittner CGCS, The Club Pelican Bay*

*Achieving certification as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary was a goal that brought immense satisfaction once accomplished. I always believed I was a good steward of the environment, but the program enabled me to quantify my achievements as well*



as provide me tools to demonstrate the value of the golf course and the programs that we have in place. In a nutshell, it is the right thing to do and it feels good!

**Darren J. Davis, Director of Golf Course Operations, Olde Florida Golf Club**

The Habitat Golf Course just went through our site visit for recertification last week. It was nice to be able to showcase our golf course not only as a golf course, but as a sanctuary to numerous species of birds and animals. I feel very fortunate to be able to preserve over 200 acres of habitat suitable for maintaining wildlife, so that all generations to come will enjoy. Jim Moller, GCS, IGM@The Habitat

I believe when you have everyone involved, you have a higher long-term success rate. This generates more creativity and support for programs that may not be well received initially by the members. I see my role in the ACSP as 'facilitator.' I enjoy helping bring other people's ideas to the table and helping them to gain a better understanding of how these programs impact our club. Audubon provides a tremendous amount of depth. Kenyon Kyle, Golf Course Superintendent, Shadow Wood Country Club

The fact that we are a certified sanctuary is just as important in our decision making as sound agronomic practices. Matthew Taylor, Golf Course Superintendent, Royal Poinciana Golf Club

For us the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses was a natural fit. It reinforced the ongoing stewardship efforts that we had been involved in for several years. The certification process, from beginning to end, was an education for my staff, my membership and me.

As golf and environmentalism continue their travel down the same path, the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses sets goals and procedures that can put your course on the leading edge of environmental awareness and promote your efforts throughout the

industry as well as your local community.

The role of today's golf course superintendent must include an awareness of our environment. Golf Course Maintenance Operations are scrutinized by employers and the public alike. Involvement in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses proves that your operation is committed to a higher environmental standard.

Once you take the first step, you'll find the hardest part was taking that step. Set certification as a goal for your career at your club. Your knowledge of your property and understanding of your complete operation will increase as you go through the process. It's a win-win! **Kyle D. Sweet, CGCS, The Sanctuary Golf Club**



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*My club's involvement in the ACSP is a statement to our members, our residents and neighbors alike that our maintenance programs are well planned and executed; and deliver the highest in turf quality and environmental care. We do it right and want everyone to know about it. The ACSP is a well respected environmental leader and to be positively associated to such an organization will only benefit the club. The Cooperative program costs nothing and is a great way to show your community you care.* **Ryan J Costello, CGCS, Audubon Country Club**

As the program succeeds club officials, members of the management team and influential golfers are infected by the positive results. Read on:

*Hammock Dunes has two courses which are certified by the ACSP. The program has been well received by the membership. It has caused us to focus our attention on our beautiful environment and to seek methods to maintain and enhance nature's great gift to us. It also bought our community together behind a noble endeavor.* **Bob Haley, MD**

*It gives you a chance to share your passion for wildlife with others and then see that passion spread throughout the entire community.* **Peggy Ogden, Landscape Manager Arlington Ridge Country Club**

*The ACSP has provided us with a method to perform self analysis of our BMP's. It gives us guidance on how our cultural practices have a positive impact on the environment. Everybody is on the GREEN bandwagon these days and anything that we as a company can share with governmental agencies is viewed in a positive light.*

*As an Audubon Certified Golf Course we are often used as a model club for responsible stewardship. The ACSP was the first step in propelling our club into a leadership role in Sarasota County. The County Commissioners look at this club in a very positive light and often solicit our input as it relates to environmental issues. The club continues to be recognized for our environmental leadership.*

*The cost to join the ACSP was low but the benefits have been substantial. I highly recommend this to all golf courses. At the very least it will bring about a self assessment to determine where you are and what you can do to improve.* **Jim Schell CCM, General Manager, Venice Golf & Country Club**

*As a leader of the Flagler Audubon Society, I wanted to gain first-hand insight into the AI programs for golf courses. I am really impressed with the overall quality of the programs and in how extremely well the programs are being managed at Hammock Dunes. I plan to propose that my own golf course apply to join this program,* **Neil Davies, Co-President, Flagler Audubon Society.** (Quotes from Hammock Dunes Creekside Course site visit recertification)

*Everything we've done as a result of participation in the program has enabled us to be better stewards of the 200 acres of land we control. We have been amazed at how little cost and little effort there can be in a program making a golf course more compatible with the environment. To anyone considering the program, I would point out that they should expect a great deal of interest and support from their membership.* **Fred Yarrington, The Hole in the Wall Golf Club**

*Efforts to achieve designation as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary have generated interest, participation, and appreciation of what is required to create and maintain our habitat and ecosystem. We have done this while still maintaining and interacting in a compatible fashion with a quality golf facility. Everyone in the FoxFire community is proud of this accomplishment.* **Ted Beisler, General Manager, FoxFire Golf and Country Club**

*The open space of our golf courses and community is utilized not only by golfers, but is a habitat for a variety of wildlife and plant species. Our goal in being part of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program is to manage our golf courses in a matter that is conducive to maintaining and enhancing the environment.* - **Robert**

**Norton, General Manager, Tournament Players Club at Prestancia**

*The Green Committee is keenly aware of our interest in mitigation efforts to enhance habitat and are supportive of suggestions for plantings that provide food and cover for birds and other small animals. I think it is important to have members of the club involved with Audubon activities, as it is an avenue for them to become stake holders in the Club, its golf course and our community.* **Dr. H. Bernton, Chairman, Audubon Committee and Member, Windstar Country Club**

*I have the ability to provide support for projects the superintendent feels will enhance the ACSP. From a corporate perspective I am able to gather the financial support, and from a club standpoint, I can involve our members. Involvement brings knowledge, and the more a club is involved, the greater our ability to educate not only our members, but our critics as well.* **Susie Stiegmann, General Manager, Shadow Wood Country Club**

*What a wonderful sense of achievement it is to know that the participation of Frenchman's Reserve in the ACSS has had an immediate effect on the wildlife and the fragile flatwoods ecosystem that they inhabit. Having finally completed this intensive certification process, I am thrilled to report that we are already seeing dramatic changes and improvements throughout the golf course.* **Elizabeth Gilmour, Landscape Superintendent, Frenchman's Reserve, Palm Beach Gardens.**

*Programs such as this represent the types of positive partnerships that need to be created across the country. This type of an effort is the only way that we can positively deal with the many, serious environmental issues that we face as a nation.* **EPA Administrator, Christine Todd Whitman, presenting Audubon International with the EPA Region 2 2001 Environmental Quality Award.**



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# Nearly 200 Attend UF Turfgrass Field Day

## Event Showcases New Research, Environmentally Friendly Management

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *In the last issue we listed the research projects the FGCSA is funding in cooperation with the FTGA and others. Here is a report to the state's general news media from the University of Florida's Envirotron and GC Horn Turf Plots, where that research is being conducted.*

By Georgia Gelmis

GAINESVILLE — Nearly two hundred green industry professionals visited University of Florida facilities July 17-18 to learn about the latest Florida-friendly turfgrass management practices. The two-day event highlighted research on pest control, fertilization and nutrient leaching.

The North Central Florida Turfgrass Field Day allows industry professionals to learn about ongoing UF research and to network with peers. With over 5 million acres of home lawns and 200,000 acres of golf courses in Florida, UF scientists are continually developing better methods for managing turfgrass, as well as breeding new species that require less water and fertilizer and with higher pest resistance.

The first day of the 2007 Turfgrass Field Day included tours of the Envirotron greenhouses on the UF campus, where turfgrass experiments are conducted in a controlled environment, and of the sports turf at the recreational sports fields and Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. The second part of the afternoon was devoted to educational sessions on weed control and fertilization conducted by UF/IFAS faculty.

On the second day, participants gathered at the UF/IFAS Plant Science Research and Education Unit in Citra,

the premiere turfgrass research facility in the nation. Faculty-led tours of the outdoor turfgrass plots were followed by a lunch sponsored by Environmental Turf and a putting contest on the greens.

Event attendees included UF faculty and students, horticulturalists, golf course managers and pesticide operators

with the facility in Citra and the research studies under way there. The Envirotron Unit on campus continues to also generate excellent data and information in more controlled growth environments.”

Billy Crow, associate professor of entomology and nematology, talked about his work on new methods for managing nematodes with beneficial parasites such as the fungus *Paecilomyces lilacinus*. If used together with water, this fungus can significantly suppress nematode numbers in the soil.

Carol Stiles, assistant professor of plant pathology, explained the effectiveness of fungicides such as Insignia, Heritage and Prostar, in combination with soil-wetting agents, for controlling fairy ring in bermudagrass and increasing turf quality.

Phil Harmon, assistant professor of plant pathology, explained the UF/IFAS turfgrass disease diagnostic program, made possible by support from FTGA and FGCSA. This rapid diagnostic program for managers of high-quality turf costs \$75 and can provide a preliminary diagnosis within 36 hours of receiving a sample. The final report provides a diagnosis based on culture plate results, and will include fungicide recommendations based on UF research.

Members of the student body were involved in the event as well. Entomology and nematology graduate student Scott Portman's presentation on the *Larria bicolor* wasp as a biocontrol for mole crickets made golf course managers aware of this economical, effective alternative to chemical controls.

The 2007 Turfgrass Field Day also showcased research by Laurie Trenholm, Jerry Sartain, Eileen Buss and Michael Dukes that hopes to shed new light on fertilization, pest control and



*From lab to turf plots Dr. Jerry Sartain continues to find the best sustainable nutrient application rates that will be environmentally responsible. Photo by Joel Jackson*

eager to learn new techniques for sounder, more efficient management of lawns and sports turf.

Golf course managers are always interested in finding new ways to combat pests and diseases harmful to bermudagrass. The 2007 Turfgrass Field Day spotlighted research being conducted by faculty members Billy Crow, Carol Stiles and Phil Harmon on ways to effectively deal with golf course pests and diseases at the lowest cost and in the most environmentally sound ways.

“We should be pleased and proud of the results our support is helping to produce across the whole spectrum of turf management issues,” said Joel Jackson, executive director of the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association. “We were very impressed





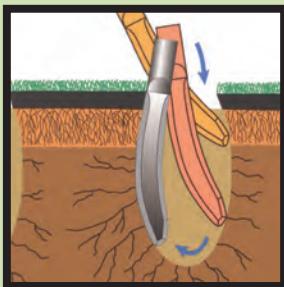
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A five-year DEP grant allows UF/IFAS professors Laurie Trenholm and Jerry Sartain to explore the effects of nutrient leaching from fertilizer on a variety of turfgrasses. The study is under way at three locations in the state, including sites in the Panhandle and South Florida. The unique Citra facility affords these researchers an opportunity to test a number of different grasses at once in a single location. Turfgrass Field Day participants were able to walk the plots and see for themselves the visual qualities of various grasses under different fertilizer and irrigation regimes.

“I enjoyed meeting with the researchers and learning more about growing healthy turfgrass in Florida,” said Jeff Michel, in field development and technical science with Bayer Environmental Science. “The information Dr. Trenholm presented on zoysiagrass nutrient requirements was very interesting. I also enjoyed seeing the turf disease trials on seashore paspalum, bermudagrass and St. Augustinegrass.”

Eventually the findings of the nutrient leaching study, which is currently in year three, will be used to determine new fertilizer policies around the state.

Kevin Kenworthy, assistant professor of agronomy, updated Field Day participants on the University of Florida’s turfgrass breeding program, a program that has focused on developing environmentally sound turfgrass cultivars since 1943. Nineteen cultivars with increased disease and pest resistance, that require less water and fertilizer, have been released by the program since its inception. As Floridians face greater restrictions for water and applied nutrients, this work becomes more relevant and important than ever.

Eileen Buss, associate professor of entomology and nematology, is looking at the short-term effects of nitrogen on chinch bug fecundity in St. Augustinegrass. Though healthy turf typically has a good resistance to pest invaders, Buss’s experiments may necessitate a reevaluation of the relationship between fertility regimes and feeding a major pest species.

Michael Dukes, associate professor of agricultural and biological engineering, tests irrigation controllers known as Smart Water Application Technologies (SWAT), which consist of evapotranspiration controllers, soil moisture sensor controllers and rain sensors that are commonly found in irrigation systems. According to UF scientists, these water savers can reduce water use by 10-60 percent during dry years, and up to 90 percent in normal to high rainfall years.

A highlight of this year’s Turfgrass Field Day was the tour of Ben Hill Griffin Stadium at Florida Field and the recreational sports fields on the University of Florida campus. John Mascaro, executive director of the North Florida Sports Turf Managers Association, arranged the tours of the sports facilities.

“There are a huge number of people involved in the sports turf industry here in North Florida. We are trying to provide additional educational opportunities for them in conjunction with the NFSTMA and the University of Florida,” said Mascaro.

Mascaro led a group of about 50 Field Day participants in an hour-long tour from the Southwest Recreational Fields over to the stadium. Along the way he spoke about the necessity of keeping UF fields safe, playable and looking good for the TV cameras.

Wayne Zurburg, maintenance superintendent for UF’s Recreational Sports division, gave Field Day participants an overview of the intensive care regimen employed on the Southwest Recreational Fields. Zurburg’s team manages 19 acres of Tifway 419 bermudagrass and a four-field softball complex. His job includes keeping the turf in prime condition for events like the annual Swamp Bowl football tournament.

“I’ve been to other colleges around the Southeast and I’ve never seen facilities to match ours,” said Zurburg. “People are blown away when they come here. Our kids get to practice on turf that’s of the same quality as Florida Field.”

Zurburg and his team mow three times a week, topdress multiple times



Besides training lawn care technicians in Green Industry BMPs, Dr. Laurie Trenholm along with research assistant Basil Wetherington, is conducting fertilizer leaching studies funded by the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection. Photo by Joel Jackson.

a year, fertilize on a strict schedule and aerate every 30-45 days to reduce compaction. Zurburg credits UF’s 10-year capital-outlay plan with having money in place for new equipment when it’s needed.

“We have a great crew with a real passion and love for the turf,” said Zurburg. “That’s really what keeps it looking so good.”

Mike Cheeseman, maintenance turf manager for Florida Field, spoke to participants in the stadium about management practices employed on Florida Field. The stadium turf had just been aerified, verticut and topdressed, so it was in top condition for the Field Day.

Turfgrass Field Day happens every year and brings together a dynamic cross section of industry professionals and researchers. The event affords a unique opportunity for business and science to intersect and allows participants to share ideas and techniques for continued improvement of Florida turf.