

Texans spur research with \$200K grant

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — The Texas Turfgrass Association has donated \$200,000 to Texas A&M University's department of soil and crop sciences as part of the Texas Turfgrass Research, Education and Extension Endowment.

"The association is hoping that with this beginning money, others will see the need for the endowment at Texas A&M and will also make contributions," said

Texas Turfgrass Association Executive Director Shirley Duble of College Station. "We hope we provide the seed money that generates more."

Turfgrass in Texas is a \$4.13 billion industry, covering about 3.5 million acres, according to the association. Single-family households, the largest sector in terms of annual expenditures, spend almost \$2.6 billion a year on lawn

care and maintenance.

Research currently includes breeding, plant pathology, urban entomology, soil science, turfgrass physiology and management, weed control and development of other leading-edge programs and technologies, according to Dr. Richard White, turfgrass researcher for the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

The endowment also may fund scholarships and internships for student enrichment and may assist the Extension Ser-

vice in the development of timely technology transfer programs for all segments of the industry.

"The economic study by Texas A&M agricultural economists pointed to the size of the industry in Texas, and we don't think people were aware of how large it is," Duble said. "We hope that with more research and education people will learn how to plant the best types of grasses, how to take care of them and how to use fewer pesticides."

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Test greens readied

Continued from page 17

Snow said these will be the first trials away from university sites for 50 years. "Frankly, what was there after Penncross [bentgrass]?" Snow asked. "There wasn't much else to test. Having a choice is a recent phenomenon."

On the pie greens of the 1930s and '40s, people tested a dozen to 15 mostly vegetatively propagated bentgrasses like Toronto, C-1 and C-19. But "they weren't designed for statistical analysis," Snow said.

The new plots will be replicated three times and randomly installed so they can be statistically analyzed, he said. The plan is for a five-year study.

The test greens will be constructed in Washington, Indiana, California, Arizona, Texas, Alabama, Illinois, Missouri, Florida, New York, Colorado, Virginia and Kentucky. Of the sixteen sites, 13 have been confirmed by the selection committee.

Contracts have been signed and agreed to at Fox Hollow at Lakewood in Lakewood, Colo.; North Shore Country Club in Glenview, Ill.; SCGA Members Club in Murrieta, Calif.; The Country Club of Birmingham in Birmingham, Ala.; The Missouri Bluffs in St. Charles, Mo.; Westchester Country Club in Rye, N.Y.; and Westwood Golf Course in Vienna, Va.

Six other courses have agreed to participate and are in the final stages of completing the contract. Discussions between the last three courses and the committee are ongoing and should wrap up within the next couple of weeks, said Jim Moore, director of the USGA's Construction Education Program.

"It's a great opportunity to show golfers the golf and scientific communities' commitment to golf and the environment," Moore said. "Plus it's a great combination effort between the USGA, GCSAA and NTEP. If this works, I can see us doing similar efforts on other matters in the future."

Moore is representing the USGA during the selection and construction phases. As it shifts into a research mode Dr. Michael Kenna, director of Green Section research, and NTEP will take over.

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