

Leach's Mail Bag Answers

Queries of Greenkeepers

Applying Lime with Milorganite

Sir:

We are rehabilitating our fairways, that burned out during the summer, by using pulverized limestone in certain places where the ground shows quite an acid reaction (pH5). The ground is first to be thoroughly rolled with a spike roller. We figure on using about one ton of limestone to the acre. The ground also needs fertilization if possible before seeding and we propose to use milorganite and apply about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of rich top soil over the seed and fertilizer.

Can you tell me if the reaction of the pulverized limestone on the milorganite would destroy the value of the milorganite if they were put on together or the milorganite shortly after the limestone? Would it perhaps be better to apply the limestone where necessary, seed and topdress and apply to milorganite after germination? Under ordinary conditions I am advised that the milorganite would promote germination and could to advantage be applied before the top soil. My question is simply asked as to the limestone. A. M. (N. Y.)

Reply

At this time of year, with the soil rapidly cooling, there is very little likelihood of ground limestone and milorganite being incompatible. There would be some element of danger in applying milorganite at the same time as *hydrated* lime, but inasmuch as the ground limestone is chemically more inert I believe you will be entirely safe.

The manufacturers of milorganite have done a great deal of experimental work with their product in relation to establishing new seedlings. As a result of this extended work they recommend the addition of 750 pounds of superphosphate (16%) per acre, this material to be worked into the soil to a depth of three or four inches. The superphosphate supplements the nitrogen of the milorganite, thereby producing a better catch of grass and a heavier turf more quickly than when the superphosphate is omitted.

B. R. Leach.

Pearlwort Control

Sir:

Thank you for your suggestions on treating pearlwort with arsenate of lead. I had an idea that lead arsenate did not affect pearlwort.

This season I have used arsenate of lead for the first time, using 5 lbs. to 1,000 sq. ft. in the first topdressing and thereafter through the summer 3 lbs. to 1,000 sq. ft. In September I applied 4 lbs. to 1,000 sq. ft.

I had quite a lot of chickweed this spring but now there is hardly a sign of it; but pearlwort has come into most of the greens this summer, some very bad. It has been a very dry summer and possibly it flourishes in a dry season. I will give the pearlwort patches an extra application of lead arsenate and see if I can discourage it. G. D. (Maine).

Reply

Glad to have the dope regarding the action of lead arsenate on pearlwort. Would appreciate more letters from greenkeepers and club officials giving their first-hand experiences as regards the action of this chemical on individual species of weeds. In this way the limitations of the chemicals as a weed killer would more nearly be determined.

B. R. Leach.

Aluminum Sulfate Toxic to Turf

Sir:

Have you any practical information on the use of sulfate of aluminum on bent greens, used for the purpose of turning the greens acid?

M. G. J.
(Penn.)

Reply:

From a theoretical standpoint, aluminum sulfate would appear to be very desirable material for the purpose of acidifying the soil of golf greens but from the standpoint of actual practice the chemical, while it certainly increases the acidity of the soil, has proved decidedly toxic to fine turf.

Turf treated with aluminum sulfate grows *fairly* well during cool weather but, as the hot season approaches, takes on a

brownish, unkempt appearance very typical of soil poisoning. The ultimate result of applications of aluminum sulfate is a thin, weakened stand of grass. You can try this for yourself on a small scale but would certainly caution against large scale operations with this compound.

B. R. Leach.

Cricket Moles

Sir:

Can you tell me some means of ridding my course of cricket moles? One fairway has had them for about two years. This summer they have attacked more fairways and are in one green.

F. M. K.

(Fla.)

Reply:

There are two methods of controlling cricket moles which have given a fair measure of success in actual practice.

The first method consists in the use of a poisoned mash or bait made up of bran, paris green and certain attracting agents. Would suggest that you get in touch with the Florida Experiment Station at Gainesville, Fla., for detailed information regarding the preparation and use of this bait.

Good results have also been reported from the use of calcium cyanide in controlling mole crickets and I suggest that you write the American Cyanamid Co., New York City, for information along this line. This company maintains agents and field men in Florida who can no doubt be of assistance to you.

B. R. Leach.

Puff Balls in Greens

Sir: We have been troubled this summer with fungus growth on our greens, particularly from puff-balls. Can you give us any information on eliminating these fungi?—G. R. (Mass.)

Reply:

Since receiving your letter of October 17th I have had some correspondence with Dr. John Monteith of the Green Section with regard to puff balls. He advises that puff balls are generally conceded to arise from the spores of the puff-ball fungus which enters the soil of the green and obtains a ready foothold due to the presence of ample organic matter in the soil. They can be controlled by using a drench of a weak solution of semesan or corrosive sublimate (brown patch dosage). It is usually necessary to fork the infested area so that the solution may penetrate well into the soil and kill all of the fungus spores.

B. R. Leach.

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