

Charlie Wilson's Notebook



Labor Still Greatest Bugaboo

According to a panel on "Practical Management," it is easier to hire men now but the old bugaboo of training them to do the job right continues. Night watering ranks high on everyone's list of most hated jobs. It is the greenmaster's biggest labor headache. Nothing is more important or harder to control — especially when night watermen decide to take a snooze or step out for a short beer.

Speaking of training, the GCSA might well consider regional workshops similar to the ones held each year by park executives. Everything from floor wax to safety is discussed — not only for the park chiefs, but for key personnel.

A Cure for Winter Brownpatch?

Big news is a possible cure for the winter brownpatch that takes a devastating toll of St. Augustine turf from mid-September until spring in the Gulf Coast region. Texas A & M graduate student John Long's trials show that a fancy named fungicide — Pentachloronitrobenzene — stops the disease cold on the school's A & M plots. Terraclor is Mathieson Chemical Co.'s trade name, and if one looks closely on an Actodione RZ label, he will see the same thing.

Long suggests one lb. of Terraclor wet-

table powder in 25 gals. or more of water for 1,000 sq. ft. Depending on the weather, it may be necessary to follow up two to four weeks later with an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Applications should be made in the fall before brownpatch strikes. Terraclor works where some other fungicides have failed.

Many will be interested in trying pentachloronitrobenzene on summer brownpatch that attacks bent. There is no information on this, so make certain the trials are on a portion of the nursery only. Be cautious and water it in well. At above rates it has temporarily discolored St. Augustine grass.

Questions Use of Ammonium Nitrate to Burn Weeds

It is common practice on some southern courses to use heavy rates of water soluble nitrogen to "burn back" weeds in Bermuda fairways. The theory is good: "Two birds are killed with one stone." The nitrogen when applied in the fall, stops crabgrass. Spring treatments kill winter annual weeds. In both instances direct foliage burning is responsible and the Bermuda is supposed to respond later with luxuriant growth.

Recent research, however, by Dr. Huffine makes one question the practice. His work shows that 174 and 261 lbs. of actual nitrogen per acre in the fall from ammonium nitrate does indeed kill crabgrass. The often overlooked point is that the Bermuda is severely injured, too!

Thus, weakening the Bermuda in the fall might invite more winter weeds. Spring treatments could pave the way for crabgrass and goosegrass. Better use the ammonium nitrate as a fertilizer and rely on sodium arsenite or DSMA as a weed killer until more is learned on the subject.

Plants Don't Grow Under "Little White Box" Conditions

Ray Keen, Kansas State University, finds a plant's environment is vastly different from official weather bureau reports gathered from that "little white box" elevated three ft. above the ground. The average temperature in Kansas and Hawaii is the same, but you can't convince the pineapple plant that Kansas is a suitable home. Transplanting a shrub 50 ft. from the south to the north side of your house may climatically be equivalent to a 600 mile northerly journey as far as the plant is concerned. It is up to man to choose wisely and alter maintenance practices to help plants adjust, according to Keen.