

Grau's Answers to Turf Questions



Educational Efforts

Demand for accurate information is the justification for educational conferences and meetings. The many letters reaching this dept. indicate that the demand is great. Colleges and universities arrange conferences and field days as a means of disseminating the latest data obtained through research.

Sometimes information is requested from unqualified persons, and when such advice is followed results can be exceedingly costly. A 7-acre scar area surrounding a new lake was ready for planting in the spring. A contractor advised: "You cannot seed in the spring. Wait until fall. That's the time to plant grass."

Spring and summer rains cut deep gullies in the slope and washed tons of silt into the lake. Fall came and qualified persons recommended:

"Plant slopes immediately whenever the grade is finished."

No Deep Gullies

Had this slope been planted in the spring, there would have been no deep gullies to fill at heavy expense: There

would have been no load of silt killing fish in the lake. The original cost would have been trifling compared to the final actual cost. It is important that information be obtained from competent sources.

Educational meetings and turfgrass courses offer indispensable information about mowers — there is a different mower to fit every turfgrass need. Some cut with a rotary motion. Some use a scissors and others a vertical plane action. Part of the education of every turfgrass manager is to know when and where to use which type of mower and to understand thoroughly the operation of each.

Must Know Equipment

Both art and science are involved in the aeration and cultivation of soil. Also, in relieving a thatched condition of turf. The turf manager must know when and how to use the machines with spoons, ones with tines, ones with spikes or ones with saw blades, to say nothing of several that cut with a vertical motion. Many meetings are held to clarify these points.

Similarly, there are several types of fertilizers involving a dozen or more plant nutrients. Some are easily fixed, some leach readily through the soil and are lost to the grass. Some are available completely and immediately, some are slowly available over a long period of time, others are intermediate. There are those that burn grass easily, those that do not burn and some are in between. Classes of materials include solubles, natural organics and synthetic organics. To use any product intelligently, the user must be in possession of the true facts regarding the material.

There is lively interest at turfgrass meetings when discussion centers around strains of grasses. Each strain has its strengths and weaknesses inherent within itself. Each has strengths and weaknesses which actually are inherent in its management. A good grass may do poorly under the conditions of one management where a rather poor grass may perform satisfactorily under another.

Educational meetings are most profitable when designed to bring accurate information on any of the multitude of available products (fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, pesticides, soil sterilants and/or the multitude of variations possible in management.)

Universities, supts.' associations and industries serving turfgrass are doing an excellent job of making accurate information available. Supts. are well advised to go to these qualified sources.