

Crabgrass Annoys Superintendents But 3 out of 4 Tolerate It

Nationwide survey by chemical company reveals much interesting data on preferences, products and problems

From the standpoint of turf maintenance, what is the biggest problem that confronts the course superintendent?

According to the findings of a large chemical company investigating the golf course market for herbicides and fungicides, supts. rate crabgrass as the grass or weed, if you prefer, that they would first eradicate. But right behind this menace, and for that matter, practically abreast of it, are weeds of the broad-leaf species and poa annua.

In the second grouping of deterrents to vigorous turf growth are insects and rodents, and in the third grouping are goosegrass, foxtail and all other retarding factors. "All other," incidentally, may cover a multitude of sins. In the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest areas, for example, it takes in clover and chickweed, and in the Western states, Dallisgrass.

The survey covered the entire U. S. and geographical groupings were made in this manner: New England; Mid-Atlantic and Midwest; North Central and Rocky Mountain; the Transition zone (N. C., Tenn., Mo. and Kan.); South; Southwest and Northwest.

The survey questionnaire was mailed to 3,776 supts. and an unusually high percentage — 20 — or 747 greenmasters answered and returned it. In all, the supts. who replied represent about 11 per cent of the 6,600 courses in the U. S.

A close study of the survey shows that these factors are most pertinent to both supts. and firms serving the golf market:

- The relative severity of the crabgrass and poa annua problems in relation to other pest problems.
- Current average treatment rates such as by acreage treated, treatments per year, etc.
- Importance of various distribution outlets in reaching the course market.
- Problems encountered by supts. in sons for such preferences.
- Preference of product form and re-using chemicals.

Go Along With Crabgrass

Even though crabgrass probably is the most undesirable vegetation that the greensmen have to contend with, their attack on it hasn't been widespread. According to the survey, slightly less than

one out of four supts. used herbicides in trying to rid fairways of it in 1961. Average treatment covered about nine acres.

About 30 per cent applied herbicides in an attempt to suppress crabgrass in the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest areas and in the Transition zone, approximately 25 per cent did so. In other regions, except New England, the range was from 10 to 20 per cent. Only about one out of 25 New England supts. saw fit to attempt to knock out the plant, and they treated only about an average of three acres. In all, three out of four supts. across the country agreed that crabgrass is a serious problem.

About 35 per cent of the supts. said that they intended to treat against crabgrass in 1962.

Treatments vs. Climate

Treatment to prevent or knock out broadleaf vegetation, however, was much greater than for crabgrass. About 57 per cent of all supts. treated against the different broadleaf species and they covered an average of 46 acres. More than three out of four applied 2,4-D treatments in the North Central-Rocky Mountain region and from 43 per cent upward did so in all other sections of the country.

As to the use of fungicides on greens, ward did so in all other sections of very clear association between the number of treatments and the climate, these being higher in warm, moist areas. The average number of greens treated per course in the U. S. is 17 and the average number of treatments per year amounts to about 11. Except in the Southwest, more greens than holes per course are treated, indicating that practice greens also get treatments. Both 9-hole and 18-hole courses were covered in the survey. This accounts for the number of greens treated coming out to an average of 17.

The poll on the use of insecticides reveals that 43 per cent of all supts. in the U. S. use Chlordane. This product is most popular in New England, where three out of five greenmasters apply it, but its application in North Central-Rocky Mountain is spotty since no more than 25 per cent of the reporting supts. said that they use it. About one out of four supts. use some other type of insecticide, with most of these specifying DDT. One out of three doesn't use in-



Clubhouse in the round describes this building at Colonial CC, Lynnfield, Mass., which contains pro shop, snack bar and cocktail lounge on upper level and steam and lockerrooms on lower level. Fabricated of cement, steel and glass, it cost less than \$200,000 and was designed by Phineas Appers and Rudolph Bedar, shown in foreground.

secticides of any kind.

Wholesaler Main Supplier

For the country as a whole, the most popular distributor of both chemicals and fertilizers is the wholesaler. He supplies half of the chemicals and 45 per cent of the fertilizers. Retail outlets, manufacturers' reps. and local manufacturers rank behind the wholesaler in that order in supplying chemicals. Manufacturers' reps, retailers and local manufacturers occupy the No. 2, 3 and 4 spots in distributing fertilizers.

If the price of different maintenance products are about the same, supts. have a slight preference for granular forms over liquid. The figures show 54 per cent in favor of granular and 48 per cent for liquid. However, if granular prices are 1/3 higher than those of liquid, 59 per cent of the supts. say they will go along with liquid products.

Three Application Factors

Easier application, equipment already owned for making application and speed of application are the three main reasons for product form preferences when the prices of liquid and granular forms are the same. Percentagewise, supts. say that liquid products are easier to apply than granular, but the difference is slight and is counterbalanced by those who say that granular can be applied more quickly. Both types of products are rated even under the heading of "better distribution."

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Crabgrass Annoys Turfmen

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Product preferences, assuming that granular prices are 1/3 higher, brought these replies:

A. Of the 59 percent who prefer liquids	No. of Mentions	Per cent of Mentions
Price	155	33
Easier application	107	23
Equipment on hand	64	14
Faster	41	9
Better distribution	36	8
Cheaper application	26	6
Better results	24	5
All other	16	2
	469	100

B. Of the 38 per cent choosing granular	No. of Mentions	Per cent of Mentions
Easier application	63	21
Cheaper application	47	16
Equipment on hand	45	15
Better distribution	32	11
Faster	28	10
Longer lasting	25	9
Safer (other plants & men)	20	7
Better results	19	6
All other	15	5
	294	100

Problems Listed

Under the heading, "Problems Encountered in Using Chemicals", the supts. listed the following:

	No. of Mentions	Per cent of Mentions
Inexperienced applicators		
or lack of help	126	19
Weather	80	12
Drift	72	11
Timing and finding time to apply	68	11
Uniform distribution	55	9
Burning desirable grasses	55	9
Golfers (busy course)	54	8
Proper dosage	44	7
Lack of proper equipment	43	7
Price	28	4
Safety to men	22	3
	647	100

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Although this survey was made with the primary intent of sizing up the chemical market, the firm which conducted it also included a question on the application of fertilizers. For the U.S. as a whole, the supts. reported the following use:

Nitrogen — lbs./acre 105.7

Phosphorus — lbs./acre 59.1

Potassium — lbs./acre 53.1

Number of applications — 2.6

Per cent using fertilizer — 81

The South is the largest user of all three elements. Supts. in that section of the country use 169 lbs. of nitrogen per acre, 107 lbs. of phosphorus and 99 of potassium. The Southwest rates second in nitrogen and the Transition area in both phosphorus and potassium. Most frequent applications of fertilizer also are made in the Transition zone with the South rating second.

Midwest Field Days

The annual Midwest regional turf field days will be held Sept. 10-11 at Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. Work that has been carried on in crabgrass control and investigations of the performance of bluegrass will be highlighted.