



GRAU'S Answers to Turf Questions

By FRED V. GRAU

WHY IS IT...

That a new Penncross green in Tennessee, where bentgrasses deserve every advantage, is in trouble because the outside expert, well paid, failed to blend the peat properly? The peat is in a layer about 2" from the top, forming nearly a perfect seal.

That golf clubs, in letting a contract to an outsider to rebuild a green (or several), do not include a performance clause to the effect that, if the work is done poorly, the contractor shall return and perform the entire operation again at his own expense?

That every so often a reminder is necessary that hydrated lime is a great "pick-me-up" in Helminth weather for ailing bent greens? (Many superintendents will recall the good results they had when they sprayed a mixture of one-half to one pound of hydrated lime and two pounds of a powdered urea-form in five gallons of water to 1,000 square feet. Even in 95° weather and high humidity the treatment stopped *Helminthosporium* leafspot and the grass started to grow again.)

That we tend to forget that the greatest tool in weed control is *fertilizer*? (In South Carolina we saw beautiful weed-free Sunturf Bermuda turf while all around were weeds and more weeds. The only difference was fertilizer.)

That the free advice and assistance of the State Extension Service is not called upon frequently? True, the extension specialists may not know *all* the answers (no one does), but the more

they are asked for opinions, the more they will strive to *find* the answers. Our taxes pay for the service; why throw away a service we've paid for?

That it is so difficult to impart a clear understanding of fertilizers, how they work and how they best should be used? (It would seem that blind unquestioning allegiance to any one material is not in harmony with progress through better understanding. Graduates of turfgrass schools have superior training for using and understanding fertilizers. Even so, they are at a disadvantage when the only materials offered on the market are *mixtures* which do not fit the nutrient needs of their turf.)

That, when phosphorus in the soil is so high as to be off the scale, fertilizer vendors continue to recommend and sell mixtures that contain phosphorus?

That superintendents are loath to tell others about the helpful things that they do to make turf management easier?

That scientists, too, often fail to publish results that could mean so much to superintendents who are hungry for information?

Q. The least of my problems is growing grass. My need is for help in solving the labor problem. (Maryland)

A. This is an involved question and a bit out of my line. This entire problem must be dealt with by superintendents and others now and in the future. Local conditions alter circumstances so greatly that a statement here would be useless. •