



## QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

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*Q: We're set to build a new USGA Green Section specification green next year. What fertilizer addition recommendations would you make for incorporation at final grading just prior to seeding and during establishment for the first year? Lacrosse County.*

**A:** Apply and rake in 1.0 to 1.5 lb N/M as starter fertilizer prior to seeding. If your budget is tight, use agricultural grade monoammonium phosphate, a typical grade being 11-48-0. Do not use diammonium phosphate, particularly if your sand has a high pH. For insurance purposes, you might also incorporate a micronutrient package. If not, use a fertilizer with micronutrients later on. After the first or second mowing apply 1.0 lb N as a high K fertilizer such as 20-0-20 or 15-0-30. Within 2 to 3 weeks you'll want to begin a program in which you're applying 0.5 to 0.75 lb N every 2 to 3 weeks. My understanding is that the Green Section recommends use of soluble N. I prefer alternating soluble N (most likely urea) with a complete fertilizer whose N:P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>:K<sub>2</sub>O ratio is approximately 3:1:2 and that contains some SRN. Using just soluble N puts

you in a feast and famine situation. Having some SRN present tends to even out the bentgrass growth. Use of the complete grade of fertilizer will help keep P and K levels optimum. Continue this program until early fall. If your sand is calcareous, in early fall re-apply about 1.0 lb N as starter fertilizer and follow this up in 2 to 3 weeks with your high K fertilizer. A late fall N application would then complete fertilization for the first year. In total, you want to shoot for 6 to 8 lb N/M the establishment year. Back this off to about 5 lb N the second year and then settle into what you feel is a good maintenance fertilization program for your golf greens.

*Q: Can you answer this question once and for all—does use of Milorganite increase the earthworm population of my fairways (and the attending mess) or not? Dane County*

**A:** If your soil is a suitable habitat for earthworms (answer "yes" if they're already present) and you fertilize with nothing but Milorganite, the answer is a definite "yes". The same answer applies if you exclusively use any of

the natural organic fertilizers on your fairways. If you use Milorganite only once or twice a year, perhaps as a dormant application, then chances are that the impact on earthworm populations is negligible. Please understand that this is my educated guess as opposed to a WAG. I'm not aware of any research wherein the effects of one or two applications of Milorganite per year on earthworm populations versus its exclusive use has been studied. Questions such as these are what make us research types realize that we're not always researching the real world.

*Q: I'm trying to find a source of ammonium sulfate that offers a smaller prill than the farm grade I've been using. Can you help me? (I am using the material as a part of a cultural control program for fairway summer patch). Rock County*

**A:** I've had the same problem. Some of the agricultural ammonium sulfate has particles the size and color of poultry droppings! To find an answer to this question, I placed a call to Tom Vlack (class of '91) at the Pine Tree

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