

Thresholds Are Different For Everyone

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Thresholds, whether economical or aesthetically based, are widely used indexes in making integrated pest management (IPM) decisions. In turfgrass, with the exception of sod growers, most pest management thresholds are aesthetic.

A threshold is merely an arbitrary level at which a pest (i.e., disease, insect, or weed) reaches, in density or intensity, whereby a management action should be or is implemented. This threshold level is frequently referred to as the action threshold.

Action thresholds are dynamic and may change within a growing season. They are affected or influenced by several factors including economic costs, potential environ-

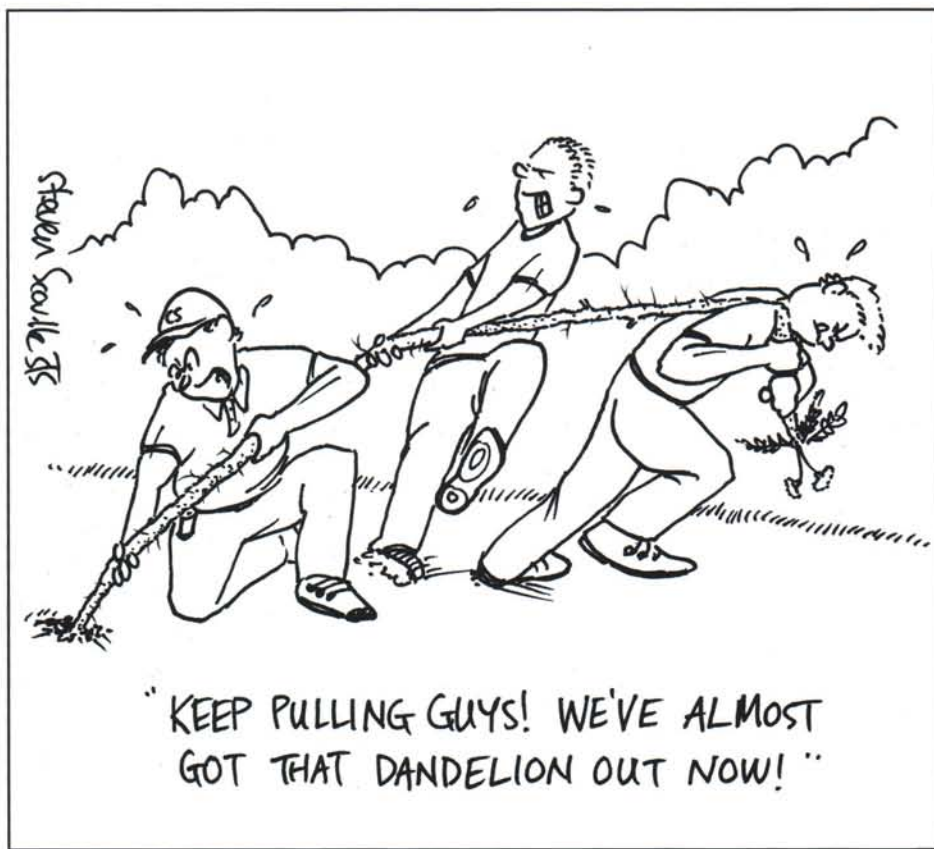
mental impact, value of a specific turf site (i.e., green, fairway, tee, or rough), and production or growing environments.

Consequently, because one or a combination of the aforementioned factors can be very different for individual turfgrass managers, arbitrary thresholds are often different for everyone. For example, aesthetic thresholds for turfgrass pests that are established by the golf course superintendent at Augusta National may be substantially different than those by a municipal golf course.

Another example is that of a golf course that has predominately sandy soils and is located near or is surrounded by large bodies of

water versus a golf course that has heavy clay soils with relatively no change in slope and is not near a river, stream, or lake. In this situation, there are vast differences in the potential environmental impact.

When establishing or determining threshold(s) for your specific pest complex, consider the level of damage or tolerance that you (i.e., your green committee or membership) are willing to accept, and yet maintain a quality-playing surface. It would serve you well to include either your green committee chairperson or chair people in this decision making process. Such action would develop and/or continue to strengthen your line of communication with them. As a result, if and when critical situations arise, your green committee and membership are more likely to be and appreciative or understanding of your situation. ♣



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