



Onion??

By **Dustin Riley**, Certified Golf Course Superintendent, Oconomowoc Golf Club

I'm sure I could have used a different simile, but our profession and industry is just like an onion. The turfgrass industry is comprised of many, very important layers. As one layer gets peeled away, a new layer is revealed. Each layer is connected to each other and provides the support and shape to the entire group. In order for each of us to be successful, it is very important that each of the layers of our industry are recognized and understood.



Many of us will automatically think our *onion* consists of the grounds department, a superintendent, assistant superintendents, equipment managers and various staff. But we need to remember that our Wisconsin *onion* is so much larger. At the core of our industry are our educational opportunities. Wisconsin is very fortunate to have a top notch turf faculty that is passionate and continues valuable turf research. Over the last 20 years, their successes are a result of the WTA efforts and the creation of the OJ Noer Turfgrass and Research Center.

The surrounding layers, in no particular order, consist of chemical and equipment manufacturers, the many distributors of those products, seed developers and sod producers, turf consultants and testing facilities, construction contractors, tee and green products, various associations and finally golf course superinten-

dents. I apologize if I might have not mentioned every layer, but I'm just trying to paint a picture. Each of us can argue which layer has a greater importance. But the important thing to remember is that each of us is a layer within the turfgrass industry *onion*. It is even more important to recognize that each layer requires the success of the other layers.

Success of the each layer requires support from all components. Golf course superintendents are typically the end users of the many products supplied by our *onion*. We can not ignore how those products or services are supplied. Their efforts help us succeed. As superintendents we must recognize those efforts and return the support to help our industry to grow. Don't just be an end user; there are many supporting roles that need to be filled. Support the many distributors that come to our aid when we push the panic button. Show support of our turf faculty and efforts of the WTA by attending the UW-Field days and the Winter Expo. Consider getting involved within the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association as a board of director, committee member or possibly host of an event. We are all connected and desire to be successful. Industry success and happiness can be achieved IF we understand and support all every layer of our *onion*. 🌱



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