

## Value of Independent Research and Information

By Dr. R. Chris Williamson, Department of Entomology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

So, where do you get product information that enables you to make an informed product selection decision? Such information can have a profound impact or effect on your desired results or outcome. There are often many responses to this question that range from a “buddy,” friend, colleague, sales representative, vendor, supplier, an internet site or blog, industry magazine advertisement, marketing literature, etc.

What source is “most” accurate? Is all, some or any of the information afforded to you inaccurate? Is your source of information providing you everything you need to know about the product, including the potential negative attributes or characteristics? The answers to these questions are critical as you develop your respective turf management strategies.

Not all information is created equal! And, seldom are the potential negative attributes or characteristics of a product revealed or made available. This is not to say that manufacturers are hiding something, but rather they primarily promote or emphasize the strengths of a product in order to separate it from their competitors. So, where can you get information about the potential negative attributes or characteristics of a product? Can you rely on the aforementioned sources that you rely on for product information?

This is a rather loaded question that also likely has many different responses, as well as no simple answer. Nonetheless, you must be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of a product in order to make an appropriate and informed decision. The bottom line is that the more you know about a product, the greater the likelihood of success you will have.

Non-biased research results and information can be readily obtained from university researchers, extension specialists as well as most independent researchers and consultants. This is not to imply that you can't get important product information from other sources, but understand that university researchers, extension specialists and independent researchers and consultants “should not” have an agenda or motive (economic or otherwise) to promote or criticize a respective product.

Their objective should be to openly discuss and provide information regarding the pros and cons of respective products. To this end, they are neither promoting



The O.J. Noer Center offers Independent Research Plots to Ensure Reliable Results

or criticizing a product, but merely providing valuable information and awareness. In addition, it is important to look at more than one study or set of data (not just the good or successful ones, but the “bad” ones as well) regarding a product as variability does exist, thus the performance or results can vary greatly as well. Again, such information is critical in making an informed product selection decision.

So, the next time you have to make an important product selection decision, consider a university researcher, extension specialist or an independent researcher or consultant as they will provide you with valuable research results and information



Bayer Environmental Science

John M. Turner  
Sr. Sales Specialist - Golf  
Bayer Environmental Science

Cell Phone: (630) 215-6110

Office: (630) 443-7807

Fax: (630) 443-7839

Email: [john.turner@bayercropscience.com](mailto:john.turner@bayercropscience.com)