

WTA Summer Field Day Has Something For Everyone

By **Tom Schwab**, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The WTA Summer Field Day will be here before you know it. The date is set for Tuesday, July 26, 2011. This is a wonderful day for you to visit the OJ Noer Facility and see all the new turfgrass research being conducted at the University. There are over 80 studies ongoing this summer and several of the most pertinent ones will be showcased during the research tours. The education will describe new turf maintenance findings to help all turf managers with their sports fields, golf courses, sod farms, lawn care properties, parks, and other commercial turf areas.

Presentations and interaction with the researchers promise to go more in depth than in past years. Comments from attendees asked for longer discussions during the educational tour. Thus quality rather than quantity will be the theme for 2011. There will be education both in the morning and afternoon.

The morning education will have a theme of 'Pesticides and Pest Control'. Are you confused by all the new herbicides that are now available? You can now selectively take bentgrass and tall fescue out of Kentucky bluegrass, or *Poa annua* out of bentgrass. You can apply broadleaf herbicides that have little to no odor, volatility, or mowing restrictions, and use herbicides that more effectively control unusual weeds such as nutsedge. Learn about all the new herbicides from university researchers at summer field day.

All turf managers strive to avoid making pesticide application errors. Learn from the experts how to avoid making costly and embarrassing application mistakes during the morning education tour.

There are also organic options to lawn pest control. Dr. Doug Soldat will explain the new UW-Madison organic turf management publication.

Explore the new pesticide management building at OJ Noer. Learn best practices for designing agricultural buildings from UW Madison agricultural engineer Dr. David Kammel. Discover costs, requirements, and tips for constructing similar buildings yourself.

That all takes place in the morning. Education continues in the afternoon with three different learning tracks. There will be a golf turf research track on the Noer research plots, a sportsfield bus tour that will visit several area athletic fields, and a lawn care workshop. The following describes the three afternoon learning tracks.

Golf turf learning track:

- Fungicide and water use on five different fairway turf species

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- The 'Greenway' study including DMI fungicide and Growing Degree Day information
- Fungicide degradation and 'Actigard' effects on dollar spot
- Secondary effects of fungicides on white grubs
- Brown ring patch and fairy ring biology

Sports field bus tour:

- Camp Randall stadium
- Goodman softball diamond
- West Madison little league complex

Lawn care workshop:

- Small equipment preventive and in-the-field maintenance
- Ride-on spreader sprayer equipment calibration
- Spray gun calibration
- Drop and rotary spreader calibration

All the education will be complemented by the ever popular summer field day trade show. Helpful vendors who will answer questions about their latest products will feature all the latest supplies, services, and equipment available to the turf industry. Several equipment vendors allow test drives of their products so you can compare between manufacturers.

New to field day this year will be an exploratory soil pit where you will learn how glaciers and other factors developed the different soil layers of south central Wisconsin. This will be both fun and educational for anyone who dares enter the depths of the Noer Facility.

Summer Field Day is a great way to learn about the latest research coming from the UW-Madison, compare the newest commercial offerings from the trade show, visit with colleagues over a great lunch, and possibly participate in one of the afternoon learning tracks. We are also hoping to have some special guests for you to visit with, and the refurbished WTA truck will be on display. You will surely leave Field Day with many ideas to put into practice back home. Call Audra Anderson, WTA administrative assistant, at 608-845-6536 if you have any questions.

Your Field Day brochure will be emailed rather than mailed to you as in previous years. The brochure will also appear in all your individual association newsletters or it can be downloaded from the WTA website, www.wisconsin-turfgrassassociation.org. Also new this year, you may pay online if so desired. Field Day 2011 is going to be the best ever, and I hope you can fit it in – July 26th.