NEED HELP?

USGA TURFGRASS
INFORMATION FILE

The USGA Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) provides computer-based bibliographic access to published materials relating to turfgrass research and management. The file is operated as a part of the Turfgrass Information Center at the Michigan State University Libraries. This USGA research project, in cooperation with GCSAA, first became operational in August of 1984 and now includes more than 10,300 references, most of which (approximately 80%) include abstracts.

FILE PURPOSES AND USES

As a file designed to support the efficient and effective retrieval of research results, TGIF can be exploited to identify source documents discussing particular grasses (or cultivars, for that matter), cultural practices, agents, research methodologies, environmental conditions, etc., alone or in combination. It is also useful as a reference tool, for example, in tying together disease nomenclatural changes, surveying the state of knowledge on a particular insect pest (in the turf context), or quickly identifying who has conducted research on a particular concern. In many cases, the abstracts themselves can provide management guidance based on summary conclusions. It is unbeatable at identifying that, "I can remember seeing an article on that about a year or so ago...," item, and quickly, too.

FILE SCOPE AND CONTENT

To build the file, current published literature from seventy journals is selectively processed, including these kinds of sources:

RESEARCH: Agronomy Journal, Plant Disease, Phytopathology, Crop Science, Canadian Journal of Plant Science, Journal of the Sports Turf Research Institute, etc.

PROFESSIONAL: USGA Green Section Record, California Turfgrass Culture, Golf Course Management, Greenmaster, etc.

TRADE: Weeds Trees & Turf, Grounds Maintenance, ALA, SportsTURF, etc.

In addition, online files and bibliographies from the National Agricultural Bureaux (U.K.), Biological Abstracts, etc., will be reviewed regularly to include materials from sources not usually reporting turf research.

Currently over 1200 different serial titles are represented in the database. Included are journals, conference proceedings, research annuals, newsletters, and extension bulletins in addition to the books, papers, theses, and dissertations, and special publications that make up the remainder of the file. Over 95% of the file entries have been published since 1968, reflecting the emphasis on recent materials.

Though significant results can be retrieved on most turf topics, it must be noted that the file continues to be "under construction" and cannot be considered "exhaustive" at this time. Coverage of the literature since 1980 is most complete, with the 1972-1979 period less well represented.

THE SETTING

Designed to compliment and enhance the existing O.J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection at the Michigan State University Library, TGIF is but one element in a three part cooperative effort to develop a Turfgrass Information Center at MSU. The Noer Collection, based on O.J. Noer's personal library and supplemented by gifts from many others, has now grown and become recognized as one of the best in the country. The O.J. Noer Foundation continues to provide support for the purchase of historical works and further additions to the collection from a variety of sources are encouraged on a continuing basis. This collection "backs up" the online index to the literature, TGIF, sponsored by the USGA Turfgrass Research Committee. Both the collection and file are operated by the MSU Libraries, which finances and implements the collection development responsibilities.

SEARCHING THE DATABASE

The database can be searched by a variety of means, including (as examples only): the presence of a word or words in a title, abstract, or as an assigned index term; author or authors; journal which the item appeared in, time period of publication, by

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year or years; referred sources only, or any combination of qualifiers. The database is constructed within the STAR database software, which features many search capabilities found only on mainframe-mounted and commercially-operated databases. This flexibility, combined with the speed of execution, makes online searching a powerful aid.

SEARCH RESULTS

Following execution of the constructed search strategy, records can be printed in a variety of formats, usually including basic bibliographic information (author, title, source, etc.), the descriptors assigned as index terms to the article, and an abstract, which usually summarizes methodology, results and conclusions. Customized output formats are also possible and can be controlled by users. Search sets are generally sorted by first-named author, though many other options are possible.

SERVICES OFFERED BY TGIC

1. Searching: To have TGIC personnel construct and execute a search, call or write the Center. Search results will be printed and mailed, normally within 48 hours.

2. Document Delivery: If a citation produced by a search contains an MSU Call Number within the record, a photocopy of the article can normally be sent out within a 48 hour period. (Limited single copies provided for private study, scholarship, or research only: if a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement).

3. Dial-up Access: If you are interested in searching the database remotely, please contact TGIC to receive the necessary technical details and registration forms. Dial-up access will be supported for most IBM PC or PC-compatible systems running under PC or MS-DOS with a 1200 baud auto-dial Hayes-compatible modem and the necessary terminal emulation software. An electronic mail and bulletin board system will also be supported for communications between dial-up users as well as with TGIC at MSU. Documentation to guide search

strategy construction, control output formats, and download records will be included in the subscription dial-up service. The computer will be available for access 18 hrs/day, 7 days a week.

4. Service Fees: To be determined.

WHAT THE TURFGRASS INFORMATION CENTER DOES

Acquire and hold materials relevant to turfgrass research, professional training, and turf management.

Index and Abstract materials for inclusion in the online file, including the development of a Turfgrass Thesaurus to guide indexing and searching. The Thesaurus currently contains over 11,000 terms and details interrelationships between useful search keywords. It will be available for distribution in 1987 to aid search strategy construction, and is also available online alongside TGIF.

Facilitate Access by searching the database, providing the printed bibliography resulting from a search, and supporting remote searching.

Document Delivery by providing access to source documents held in the MSU Libraries.

HOW CAN YOU HELP

Contribute materials written, edited or distributed by yourself or your institution/agency/association/corporation. The more information processed by the Center, the more that is available online. Put us on your mailing list, and send us reprints of your publications.

BEFORE YOU CALL

Identify your topic concisely, and inventory synonyms, acronyms, or closely-related terms to help in search construction.

WHO TO CONTACT:
  USGA Turfgrass Information File
  Turfgrass Information Center
  Library W-212
  Michigan State University
  East Lansing, MI 48824-1048

  (517)353-7209
  8 am - 5 pm EST
  Mon. - Fri.