

Turfgrass Information Center  
Michigan State University Libraries

**2000 Annual Report**

USGA Green Section Turfgrass and Environmental Research Program  
October 2000

**I. Program Initiatives and Accomplishments 1999-2000:**

1. Continued construction of the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF).

Increasing by just over 5,300 records during the period 1/September/1999 to 1/September/2000, TGIF now includes over 69,000 records of all types. The year's production includes both currently published materials as well as some retrospective processing.

2. Interface improvements to Web search engine.

Two major modifications to the current suite of TGIF search interfaces were developed and prototyped. They include a new "Simple Search for Online Material", which will retrieve full-text Web content only, as well as a modified interface for the "General Search" alternative. This incorporates several improvements based on user feedback, interface testing, failed-search transaction logs, and software evolution. The end result should be fewer "0" search results, as well as greater retrieval for more unusual searches. In addition, it is possible to make more search adjustments to "dig deeper" to identify additional materials if insufficient materials are found.

3. Server migration.

TIC's database server migration to a new, faster SUN Ultra 5 was completed in August, resulting in decreased response time for searching, increased construction efficiencies, decreased backup downtime, and reduced maintenance costs.

4. Visual materials assessment.

TIC received, on indefinite loan from the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, and with the O.J. Noer Research Foundation as trustee, the collection of visual media materials generally known as the "Noer Slides." This extensive range of visuals, when processed, will provide a nearly unique view of historic turf management. Processing of the print index ledgers (which exist for parts of the collection) into a database format are underway; grant monies will be sought to speed image digitization, the completion of subject-content indexing, and production of a web interface to portions of the material.

5. "Assessing the State of the TIC Databases and the Turfgrass Literature" initiative. This past year saw the start of the initial phase of a multi-year effort to better delineate:

- a. The extent and characteristics of the turfgrass literature (and thus all content which should be processed for TGIF).
- b. Coverage effectiveness of TGIF.

c. The bibliometric characteristics of the literature, to determine whether the turfgrass literature has achieved a discrete character based on its level of maturity.

d. Alternative data formats and content of interest to TIC users not available from other sources.

The initial outcome of this effort, "The Turfgrass Information File (TGIF): Database Characteristics and Content Evaluation", by Carrie Preston, a graduate student in the School of Information at the University of Michigan, and former TIC student staff member, includes a comparative assessment of TGIF retrieval as compared to the three primary agricultural bibliographic databases (AGRICOLA, AGRIS, and CAB). This manuscript (see <http://www.lib.msu.edu/tgif/tgifreport.htm>) continues in revision and will be submitted for publication.

6. Noer Collection deacidification.

Phase II of a multi-year project by the MSU Libraries to deacidify portions of the Libraries' collections which are of special significance included the bulk of the Noer Collection. This off-site processing neutralizes acidic papers, as well as leaving a basal residue to buffer the papers into the future. While not reversing the impacts of age-induced brittleness, it does avoid further deterioration.

7. Turfgrass Thesaurus expansion.

The addition of over 1,900 terms to the Turfgrass Thesaurus, TIC's subject indexing vocabulary and nomenclature database, expands not only the precision of TIC's indexing, but also increases the ability of TIC's web interfaces to retrieve results in the subject and general search interfaces (eg. "annual bluegrass" searches "Poa annua").

## **II. Anticipated 2000/2001 Initiatives :**

1. Continued construction of the TGIF Database.

2. Announced availability and promotion of database "fastlinks" capabilities.

This capability will provide for document or website-imbedded links support to specific records or searches by outside users, regardless of affiliation or system knowledge. See: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/tgif/flinksam.htm> for samples and narrative explanation of this new "push" approach to TGIF content.

3. Increase full-text content available via TGIF.

Whether through cooperative agreements and cross-loads, licensing agreements, or increased producer availability, we intend to promote and facilitate the increased availability of "full-record" content via the TGIF engine.

4. Continued refinement and improvements to the search engine, to further increase ease-of-use and searching flexibility.

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Executive Summary

Continuing:

- A forty-year effort to build an institution-based, publicly-accessible collection of turfgrass literature in support of turfgrass science and better management of turfgrass facilities,
- The seventeen-year effort to electronically index the literature of turf culture, and,
- Continuous efforts to help link information-seekers with information resources.

The Turfgrass Information Center has increased the size of the TGIF database, to a current total of over 69,000 records, while continuing to introduce improvements to the World Wide Web search interfaces to the data. An increased emphasis on full-text availability (when feasible), increased ease-of-use for online searchers, and greater outreach with sample database content will characterize the coming year.

Our continued thanks for the support of the Research Program in building the Endowment for the Turfgrass Information Center.