

Industry News

EFFECTS OF CULTURAL PRACTICES ON EXISTING SCHOOL FIELDS

Dol Turf Spearheads Field Research

BOND HEAD, ON. The Simcoe County District School Board, with trial partners Dol Turf Restoration, DCS Agronomics, Sports Turf International, Agrium and Vanden Bussche Irrigation, have begun a two year study on the effects of specific cultural practices and slow release nitrogen products on two existing high school sportsfields.



High school fields take a tremendous, season-long pounding, and with limited budgets school boards have a difficult challenge maintaining safe and playable sports fields. With the help of Dol Turf Restoration and DCS Agronomics, a series of trials using different aeration methods and fertility regimes will be applied to a brand new field (engineered by MMM Group) as well as an older, more established field. All of the field work is being supplied by Dol Turf Restoration, with base line and data analysis by Dave Smith of DCS Agronomics.

The results will be monitored and tracked by state-of-the-art GPS mapping

and plant health monitoring systems as well as through visual evaluations. Water usage will be tracked using both weather station and field sensor techniques, with the equipment supplied by Vanden Bussche Irrigation.

Fertility is a critical component to maintaining healthy turf under intense pressure. Several different slow release nitrogen products will be monitored for longevity, turf health and aggressiveness. Agrium is supplying several different nitrogen products for the trials.

Over a two year period, different aeration methods such as deep tining, traditional coring, shattertine and solid tine treatments will be used on randomized, three replication plots. Demonstration areas have also been set up to show the effects of practices such as verticutting and organic amendments.

The end goal is to identify the most effective methods and product applications for a school field environment, which will aid the Simcoe Board to develop the best sports field maintenance specifications for their schools. It is anticipated that results will be presented in 2012. For further information, contact Ken Pavely (kpavely@dolturf.com) or Gord Dol (gdol@dolturf.com) at Dol Turf Restoration, 1-800-794-9664. Visit them online at www.dolturf.com.

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