Calendar of Events

Rutgers Turfgrass Research field Days
July 28, Wed.-Lawn & Landscape Section - Adelphia Research Farm. Reg. 8am $35 reg. includes lunch at 12. – Tour 9am-3pm. Note: First 50 registrants receive a free cap.

July 29, Thurs. - Golf & Fine Turf Research Section – Hort. Farm II-Ryder's Lane, North Brunswick. . 8:30am $35 reg. includes lunch at 12:30. – Tour 9:30am-3pm Pesticide Recertification Credits Offered On Both Days. FOR INFORMATION CALL: Dick Caton (856) 853-5973 or Marlene Karasik (732)932-9400 Ext. 339

14th Annual IANJ Golf Tournament
August 16, Mon. at Royce Brook Golf Club, Somerville. Reg. 10:30am, lunch 11am -1pm, start 1pm, Dinner/awards 7pm. Cost: $175 per person, $75 non-golfer. Deadline Aug. 2. Call (973)379-1100

SFMANJ Third Annual Outdoor Fall Field Day/Trade Show/Equipment Demonstration Day
August 17, Tues. – Plainsboro Twps. Community Park. Reg. $40 members, $50 non-members Reg. 7:30am, begins 8am-4-m, includes BBQ lunch See front page for details. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (908)730-7770. Participating organizations are NJTA, NJLCA, IANJ.

New Jersey Recreation & Parks Assoc. Playground Safety Course
For more information call Bill Foelsch (732)568-1270 ◆

Letter from the President

I am very excited to say that our 2003/2004Membership Recourse Directories have been mailed out.The main person from each organization or company should have received a copy. Because of the high cost in producing the directory, we limited it to the first paying member. If you want more copies we would be happy to send you one for a fee of $12.00. If you need a replacement binder there will be an extra charge of $4.00.

Please use this directory to find the products and equipment you need. I encourage you to support our member vendors. Look for fellow sports field managers and professionals to reach out to with your turf problems and product searching. This book is a one-stop shop.

If you did not see your name in the directory, it may be because you did not become a member or renewed your membership in time for this printing. We will send everyone an update in October with any errors and new members. If you are not sure, please call the office or e-mail us at hq@sfmanj.org or (908)730-7770.

Also, I hope you take advantage of the Fall Demo/Trade Show/Education field day on Aug. 17th. Check out the information in this newsletter, sign up now or call if you have questions. This will be our biggest field day ever with the inclusion of NJTA, NJLCA AND IANJ. There will be something for everyone. ◆

Eleanora Murfitt-Hermann

"Rutgers Corner"

Soil pH and Use of Lime

***by Brad Park, Rutgers**
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Unfortunately, lime is often applied annually to sports fields for no other reason than, "We've always done it that way." Conversely, some sports field managers are reluctant to apply lime or skeptical of the benefits of applying lime because turfgrass will not show an immediate response to a lime application, in contrast to the rapid growth associated with the application of a soluble nitrogen fertilizer. The purpose of this edition of ***Rutgers Corner*** is to discuss the concept of soil pH and describe how to utilize liming materials to correct low pH soils.

The basics of soil pH

All soils can be classified as acidic, neutral, or alkaline. Acidity and alkalinity are defined in terms of the hydrogen ion (H^+) concentration found in pure water. If the soil solution contains more hydrogen ions than are found in pure water, the soil is considered acidic. In contrast, if the soil solution contains fewer hydrogen ions than are in pure water, the soil is considered alkaline. The degree of acidity or alkalinity can be described by a pH range from 0 to 14. Any value below 7.0 is considered acidic; a value of 7.0 is neutral; a value above 7.0 is considered alkaline.

In humid, high-rainfall regions such as New Jersey, soils become acidic through natural processes and human activities. Rainfall will leach elements from the soil such as calcium and magnesium deep into the soil profile and replace them with hydrogen ions from the water. Additionally, use of ammonium-based fertilizers and acid rain contribute to the creation of acidic soils.

Soil pH affects turfgrass health by influencing the availability of plant nutrients as well as elements that can be detrimental to turfgrass vigor. Soil pH can also affect the susceptibility of turfgrasses to certain diseases. Strongly acidic soils ($pH \leq 5.5$) may lead to deficiencies in calcium, magnesium, or phosphorous and increase the availability of elements such as aluminum to levels that are toxic to turfgrasses.

In strongly alkaline soils ($pH \geq 8.5$), phosphorous can be unavailable to the plant. Interestingly, research has shown that soil pH values above 6.5 appear to enhance summer patch disease development. Kentucky bluegrass is a widely used cool season turfgrass for sports fields in New Jersey and many varieties are susceptible to summer patch. Annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*), while generally considered a weed, is often a species found on sports fields and is also susceptible to summer patch. Repeated annual liming can potentially predispose Kentucky bluegrass (and annual bluegrass) sports fields to summer patch, which can devastate a turfgrass playing surface.