

UPDATE

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Sports Field
Managers Association of New Jersey



RUTGERS LAWN, LANDSCAPE AND SPORTS TURF FIELD DAY

SFMANJ to Sponsor Trade Show & Equipment Demos at Rutgers Adelphia Research Farm

SAVE THE DATE - Wednesday, August 5, 2009

By Brad Park

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) will once again collaborate with the New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA) and Rutgers University to take part in the annual Rutgers Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Turf Field Day at the Rutgers Adelphia Turfgrass Research Farm in Adelphia, NJ. Both a morning trade show and equipment demonstrations will be sponsored by SFMANJ.

This is a great opportunity for SFMANJ members and other Green Industry professionals to network with peers and industry representatives, examine the latest product offerings at the trade show, see the latest sports field and landscape equipment in action during the demonstration period, and learn about selecting and managing turfgrass. Pesticide credits will be available to those certified applicators in attendance.

The schedule for August 5 is as follows:

7:30 am	Registration and Trade Show Opening
9:00 am	Research Tours & Equipment Demos
1:00 pm	Lunch
2:00 pm	Optional Core Pesticide Credit Session
2:30 pm	Conclusion

Look for registration materials in the mail. Online registration is available at the NJTA website: www.njturfgrass.org

Brad Park is Sports Turf Res. and Ed. Coord., Rutgers Univ.; SFMANJ Board member, and Editor, SFMANJ Update



John Coombs, Owner, Coombs Sod Farm, hosted lunch and an afternoon tour of his farm in Elmer, NJ on April 9, 2009 as part of Spring Field Day.

Spring Field Day 2009: Kingsway High School and Coombs Sod Farm

By Debbie Savard and Don Savard, CSFM, CGM

We had a beautiful spring morning for our field day at Kingsway Regional High School on Thursday, April 9, 2009. As vendors and attendees gathered, Northern Nurseries treated us to coffee and donuts.

SFMANJ President Don Savard, CSFM welcomed everyone and then passed the microphone to Plant Food Company, Till Paint, Tri State Materials/Green Pro, Turf Equipment and Supply, Power Place, Rainbird, Turface, Fisher and Son, The Viersma Company and Farm-right as they told us about their companies and products. Dryject was first up for the demos. They demonstrated their Dryject machine which forces high pressure water into ground then fills the hole with a dry soil amendment to aid in drainage. Board Member Jim Gates from Jim Gates & Co. brought along some of his equipment suppliers. Jason and Dave from Blec USA came up from South Carolina and showed us their Blec turf renovation equipment and George Bannerman from Ontario, Canada later demonstrated his Superject Aerator.

Tour of Kingsway High School Sports Fields, Woolwich Township, NJ

Kevin Shipman, head groundskeeper at Kingsway gave us a few words and took us on a guided tour of his facility. Then it was over to his baseball field where Ron Martin from MarCo Clay Products demonstrated field layout. The group also saw a live demonstration of laser grading by board member

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Kevin Shipman, Sports Field Manager, Kingsway High School, demonstrates how to create a logo at the SFMANJ 2009 Spring Field Day

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Sean Connell, owner of **Georgia Golf Construction**. His machine takes out all the guess work when setting grades. George Bannerman demonstrated his infield grooming machine. Board member Scott Bills from **Northern Nurseries** had arranged for a fascinating mound building demonstration in collaboration with Ron Martin. These guys really know their business and, I'm sure that everyone learned lots of tricks of the trade, both in field construction and helping their team perform at their best.

We then moved over to the softball field where Tony Leonard from the Philadelphia Eagles headed a logo painting demonstration as performed by our host Kevin Shipman. Paint mixtures and application were discussed as Kevin painted a big "K" in his outfield. The stencil was generously provided by **World Class Paint**.

Lunch and pesticide credit education at Coombs Sod Farm, Elmer, NJ

After packing everything up, we headed over to **Coombs Sod Farm**. A wonderful catered buffet lunch was provided by our host John Coombs in his pole barn that he had actually carpeted with sod just for our event.

As lunch settled, SFMANJ Board Member Brad Park, Rutgers University, gave a very informative talk on pesticide sprayer calibration. Pesticide credits were awarded later.

An inside look at Coombs Sod Farm

After lunch and the pesticide lecture it was off to visit the sod farm. John had thought of everything and rented a bus to take attendees out to see the sod harvesters at work. Many of our group had never seen a sod harvesting operation and the precision at which it was done.

John Coombs is the eighth generation of his family to cultivate this land where potatoes, corn, soybeans, spinach and string beans are grown. In 1999, John began to include turfgrass sod as part of a crop rotation program. A feature of this crop rotation is that insect, disease and weed problems that can affect one crop rarely reach alarming proportions because just as the pest become a problem, the host crop is gone, replaced by a much different crop. The pests leave confused. The result is reduced fertilizer and pesticide inputs and ultimately reduced production costs.

On the bus tour, we passed fields of Kentucky bluegrass and turf type tall fescue sod in various stages of the production cycle. We drove alongside one of 11 center-pivot irrigation systems on the farm, a method of crop irrigation in which equipment rotates around a pivot and a circular area is irrigated, often creating a circular pattern in crops when viewed from an airplane. The turf receives about an inch of water each time it is irrigated and it takes about 3 days for the pivot to travel 360 degrees to the starting point.

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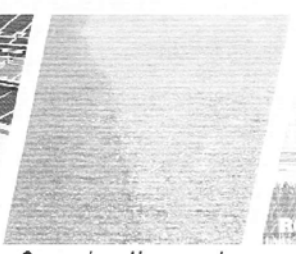
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Turfgrass is mowed at 2 inches using three 22 foot wide rotary mowers pulled by 55 hp tractors. "Unlike traditional sod farms which use reel mowers for their mowing, we machine our rotary mower blades to exacting tolerances that make (the blades) as sharp as razors. But we also use a fairway mower to mow turf at the shorter heights for our golf course customers" said Coombs.

Coombs Farms sells both traditional slabs of sod rolled-up and palletized in 500 square foot units or 300 square foot big rolls popular with sports field managers. The Trebro sod harvesting machine operates in a laser guided straight line and cuts, rolls, and stacks the sod rolls in alternating courses on a pallet until it is full. Big roll sod is harvested using a different type of harvesting machine, smaller than the Trebro, and requires a 3 person team.

After the tour, we awarded the pesticide credits and held a door prize raffle with items that were donated by our very supportive vendors. The prizes were so numerous that almost everyone went home with something and if they missed out, John Coombs generously made sure that everyone got a Coombs Farm tee shirt. It was a great day and a good time was had by all that participated.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this field day a success!

Thank you to all of our vendors who supported us and provided us with information, demonstrations and great door prizes. Thank you to our hosts, Larry Lore and Kevin Shipman at Kingsway Regional High School and John and Donna Coombs at Coombs Sod Farm. Thank you to Brad Park for the IPM talk. And thank all of you who attended.

Be sure to check out our web site for updates on coming events: www.sfmanj.org

Hope to see you at our next field day!


Debbie Savard is SFMANJ Executive Secretary.

Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) and Certified Grounds Manager (CGM);




Director, Athletic Facilities & Grounds, Salesianum School; and President, SFMANJ.

DID YOU KNOW?

SFMANJ will hold a Fall Field Day on September 23, 2009 in Monroe Township, NJ. The softball field at Monroe Township was awarded the 2008 SFMANJ Field of the Year.




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