



A Message from The President

By Don Savard, CSFM, CGM

**There is an old saying -
“If you are not moving forward, you
are moving backward”.**

All of us at some point in our careers find ourselves in that spot of uncertainty where it is hard to tell which way we are heading. Opportunities sometimes seem to dry-up. Those of us who have jobs find ourselves grateful to have a paycheck, yet sometimes we feel unfulfilled because whatever dreams or entitlements we thought we had just aren't happening. One thing is certain; we have to take care of our physical, mental and spiritual health in order to keep moving forward.

Being an active member of the SFMANJ helps to keep me moving forward. My mind stays sharp because I am constantly learning things. Whether it is a session I attend at EXPO or one of the numerous baseball infield clinics I have attended, if I pay attention, I will learn something I did not know before, often from the most unlikely person.

What I like about attending our events is that I find myself surrounded by people who I have plenty in common with. I'm talking about people who know and understand what it takes to do our jobs well. People who can see and point out the things I am too close to, or too blind to notice. These are people who watch each other's back. It is a wonderful network! I have introduced members of my network to each other. New alliances have been formed. The result has been good in many ways for all parties.

When I became active in this Association, I was asked to be of service. Giving service has really increased my confidence. When your confidence increases, you grow. For whatever service I have been privileged to give, the personal rewards have been much greater.

Perhaps the greatest gift of all has been the close friendships I have developed over the years with many of you. These are friendships that go far beyond what it takes to make a ball field better.

On behalf of the SFMANJ Board of Directors I cordially invite you to join us at our upcoming events. We have tried to make attending easier for you. Many (but not all) of our events such as field days and clinics are now absolutely free for members; all that we ask you to do is let us know if you are coming, mail, phone or email, it's that easy. And it sure beats trying to get a purchase order! I hope to see you soon!

Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) and Certified Grounds Manager (CGM); Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds, Salesianum School; and President, SFMANJ.

2012 Organic and Reduced Pesticide Input Turfgrass Management Courses

offered by

**Rutgers University, NJAES Office of
Continuing Professional Education**

By Brad Park

In an effort to reduce human exposure to synthetic pesticides used on public sports fields and grounds, municipalities across New Jersey have developed either an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy intended to reduce synthetic pesticide inputs or an organic turf care policy intended to eliminate synthetic pesticide use entirely.

According to the New Jersey Environmental Federation, 40 New Jersey towns have banned synthetic pesticides from their municipally-managed parks and grounds and subsequently labeled these properties as 'pesticide free zones.'

Moreover, a bill was introduced by the New Jersey State Legislature in December 2010 called the Safe Playing Fields Act, which will, upon passage, ban synthetic pesticide use on grounds at day care centers, schools, and athletic playing fields within municipal, county, and state parks.

Rutgers University's New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) Office of Continuing Professional Education (OCPE) is holding courses in 2012 to help municipalities and boards of education better understand their needs and goals related to organic and reduced pesticide inputs in turf management.

Organic Turfgrass Management is a 1/2-day course scheduled for Tuesday, January 31, 2012, on Rutgers University's Cook Campus that will introduce and explain organic turf management theories and methods to students.

Differences in organic, organic-synthetic hybrid, and IPM methods of maintaining lawns and grounds can be confusing. Poorly-defined words and poorly-written statements in municipal resolutions mandating turf care policies can often lead to problems regarding the appropriateness products used by turf care contractors/managers. For example, certain 'low-risk' herbicides are being characterized by some as 'organic' but these are not approved as such in the USDA National Organic Program Standards or by the Organic Materials Review Institute. There is also disagreement over whether turfgrass fertilizers derived from sewage sludge should be allowed in organic turf care. Organic programs need to be clearly defined so that there is little question as to what can and cannot be applied; this course will clarify these issues.

Turfgrass selection and establishment of well-adapted varieties are critical components of an organic program. Improved disease

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