



2016 USGA Turf Colorant Workshop

By Patrick O'Brien, agronomist, Southeast Region

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On Feb. 2, 2016 approximately 70 attendees gathered at the Pinehurst Resort in Pinehurst, N.C. for the 4th annual USGA Turf Colorant Workshop. Kevin Robinson and John Jeffries of the Pinehurst Resort hosted the event. Attendees included not only superintendents from around the Southeast Region, but also superintendents from the Northeast Region and as far away as the Dominican Republic. Turfgrass students and teachers from Sand Hills Community College also attended.

The use of turf colorants on golf courses has exponentially increased since 2010. When compared to overseeding, using turf colorants uses less fertilizer, water and labor. Additionally, herbicide programs can be simplified by using turf colorants, leaving more options for weed control. Many companies now manufacture turf colorants.

However, there can be wide differences in colorants. The indoor portion of the workshop was highlighted by presentations on the chemistry of turf colorants and case studies of successful turf colorant use on golf courses.

Selecting a turf colorant is only the first step in a program. Getting colorants from the container into the sprayer and onto the turf is an art all by itself. Rob Vaughan, golf course superintendent at Brunswick Plantation in Calabash, N.C.,



The "one-and-done" spray application method was demonstrated to the attendees at the USGA Turfgrass Colorant Workshop at the Pinehurst Resort.

has been perfecting the use of colorants over the last six years. Vaughan provided an update on advancements in sprayer setup and conducted an outdoor demonstration on dormant bermudagrass fairway turf.

The use of turfgrass colorants continues to evolve. Not only are colorants used on dormant or semi-dormant bermudagrass, but also on overseeded fairways – often referred to as hybrid overseeding. Hybrid overseeding has reduced ryegrass overseeding rates by up to 80 percent at some courses.

Turf colorants can produce spectacular playing conditions and help a golf course's bottom line. Attendees of this workshop went home with valuable information and developed a network of contacts. Plans are to hold this workshop annually. In the meantime, be sure to schedule your 2016 Course Consulting Service visit soon to ensure that you stay abreast of not only turf colorants but all the latest information on golf course turfgrass agronomics.

For more information on turf colorant use:

[Turf Colorants for Aesthetics and/or an Alternative to Overseeding](#)

[Let's Make A Deal: Overseed or No Overseed?](#)

[Instant Overseeding: Coming to a Fairway Near You](#)

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