

## Establishing A *Poa annua* And Bentgrass Putting Green Nursery

By Pat Gross, regional director, West Region | October 20, 2017



*A nursery established with aeration cores will contain the same biotypes of *Poa annua* found on the putting greens from which the cores were harvested, providing a near-exact match whenever sod is transferred.*

**C**ore aeration and sand topdressing are in progress at many golf courses with *Poa annua* and creeping bentgrass putting greens throughout the West Region. As part of this process, some courses are taking the opportunity to build or expand their putting green nursery using the cores generated by aeration. Aeration cores contain the same varieties of creeping bentgrass and biotypes of *Poa annua* as the putting greens from which they were harvested, creating nursery turf that is a near-perfect match for existing putting greens. Here are eight simple steps for creating a putting green nursery using aeration cores:

1. Prepare the site of the nursery green by clearing any existing vegetation and grading it to provide adequate surface drainage – a 2- to 3-percent slope generally is sufficient.
2. If necessary, modify the irrigation system to evenly cover the nursery site.
3. Install a sand root zone mix to a depth of 8-12 inches. It is best to use the sand currently used for topdressing so that it best matches the material on the surface of

- the existing putting greens. There is no need for organic amendments since the cores contain adequate organic matter.
4. Apply a starter fertilizer – e.g., 6-20-20 – to supply 0.5 pounds of nitrogen and 1 pound each of phosphorus and potassium per 1,000 square feet. Lightly work the fertilizer into the root zone.
  5. Collect and spread the aeration cores. Spreading can be done using a topdressing machine or with a scoop shovel. However they are spread, try to create a layer that is two-cores deep across the entire surface of the nursery green.
  6. Apply creeping bentgrass seed over the top of the cores at the rate of 0.75 pound per 1,000 square feet. This will help to improve sod strength.
  7. Roll the cores with a water-filled roller or the tires of a mechanical bunker rake so that the cores and seed have good contact with the root zone mix.
  8. Lightly and frequently irrigate throughout the day for approximately two weeks to keep the cores and seed moist until good germination is evident.

The USGA article, "[Poa/Bent Nurseries – A Perfect Match](#)," provides further details on this process.

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