

Current Trends in Sod Production

AMERICA'S cultivated sod industry has seen at least two milestones which have been major stimulants to its growth. The development of the powered sod cutters in the late 40's and the introduction of Merion bluegrass in the early 50's contributed tremendously to the expansion of sod growing. Staying ahead of today's business may help to develop other milestones and to correctly evaluate proposed changes as steps forward or backward.

While such changes in the past have arisen without pressure from our industry, more and more such changes should be industry stimulated. Constant evaluation of growing and handling techniques should reveal many places for improvement. With the size the industry is achieving, we should be increasingly successful in encouraging equipment manufacturers to develop machinery designed for our needs.

The labor-consuming job of rolling sod seems to be coming closer to a solution. The entire

By **BEN WARREN**

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Progressive sod producers like Ben Warren (center) perform extensive research on their sod farms. The structure above enables Warren personnel to test new shade-growing Kentucky bluegrass under various sunlight intensities. Looking on above are Robert Warren (right) and marketing advisor W. P. Pettit. Building is in Palos Park, Illinois.

WTT's Sod Industry Section to Be Monthly Feature

HERE IS the first of a new monthly feature of *Weeds Trees and Turf* devoted exclusively to production and marketing of cultivated turfgrass sod in America.

This section is being initiated because of the growing importance of sod farming, and because there is presently no regular coverage of problems unique to sod growers available in other media.

While the section will be of particular value and interest to sod growers themselves, other *WTT* readers will also find these articles helpful. Those who sell or install sod, those who are called on to treat lawns grown from sod, and those who buy sod for installation will find the articles in *SIS* of note.

Many months in preparation, *SIS* is the result of extensive surveys of state agricultural departments and turf agronomists, trade associations, turfgrass producers, and others. During the months when data on sod

production were being gathered by *WTT*'s market research staff, other personnel were assembling comprehensive articles from some of the best minds in the industry today.

In the coming months, this section will deal in detail with such topics as new methods of harvesting sod; advantages of automatic irrigation; new concepts of transporting sod from farm to market; labor management on the sod farm; and other such subjects.

In addition to these feature articles, *SIS* will contain a number of news and product stories, along with advertising pertaining specifically to sod production.

The editors feel this new portion of *WTT* is a necessary addition because of editorial policies, which have dictated that *WTT* become the single authoritative national monthly covering all three phases of nonfarm vegetation maintenance and control.