

taining the grass during its early, critical period.

"A sound, functional sod certification program can help bring a better quality sod to the market," J. L. Newcomer, University of Maryland professor, related. With the wide range in quality of sod being sold around the country, at least six states have cultivated sod certification programs underway, and the International Crop Improvement Association Grass Committee is working on General Certification Standards for Sod. Why certify? "Certification can help in marketing of quality sod of named varieties," Newcomer stated. The general public, and particularly architects and builders, want and need more information on suitable grasses and the assurance they are getting what has been requested.

#### Panel Views Sprigs and Plugs

"Rooting of stolons or sprigs is affected by the same three basic elements as seed: water, heat, and oxygen," Tobias Grether,

president of California Turf Nurseries, told the joint meeting of golfmen and sodmen. Considering establishment characteristics of both bents and Bermudas, Grether outlined some basics for a good stand from stolon or sprig plantings.

Bents are easier to germinate and grow, though depth of planting is a critical factor. Intimate contact of stolons with soil must be established in the top  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. of soil. Constant watering to nearly field capacity is then required. Temperature can range from a daily average of  $38^{\circ}$  to  $90^{\circ}$ , with the optimum growing temperature at  $60^{\circ}$  to  $70^{\circ}$ .

Planting Bermuda stolons is a more critical operation, and greater care must be taken to get intimate contact between soil and stolons, since material left on the surface will generally desiccate. Just as it is important to avoid planting Bermuda stolons in a dry soil, irrigation is required almost immediately after planting. Temperature av-

erage must be at least  $50^{\circ}$  with no frost to establish Bermudas and zoysiagrass.

Describing sprigging and plugging as "the most popular methods of vegetative propagation of large turf areas in the Southeast," James E. Ousley, president of Ousley Sod Co., pointed out that bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, and creeping bent are generally sprigged, while St. Augustine-grass and centipedegrass usually give better results from plugging.

Sprigging is most commonly used on large turf areas, and gives faster, more uniform coverage than plugging. It is less expensive but more susceptible to weather changes and requires greater initial irrigation. Plugging carries a higher planting cost but is desirable where only limited water is available.

Wade Stith, West Point Products Corp., West Point, Pa., emphasized temperature and moisture as determinants of how well harvested stolons will stand up. "Excessive moisture can cause disease and loss of grass and a poor stand, while dryness can cause death when stolons are planted," he related. Experiments with refrigeration of harvested grasses have shown that they can be kept in excellent condition for several weeks as long as the temperature is maintained at the proper level.

A short question and answer session followed up the "Sprigging and Plugging" forum, with much of the discussion aimed toward Ben Warren's contention that seeded Penncross bent will show considerable variability in color, texture and disease behavior when observed in space plantings.

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