

O.J. Noer Grant-In Ald Presented to MSU

Frank I. Shuman (on left) presents a continuing O. J. Noer Research Foundation, Inc., \$4,000.00 grant-in-aid check to Dr. James B. Beard at the Michigan State Turfgrass Conference, East Lansing, Michigan, in mid-January.

Beard heads the turf research work at Michigan State University. Shuman is Secretary-Treasurer for the O. J. Noer Foundation and a Philadelphia area Toro distributor.

In addition to the research at Michigan State, The Noer Foundation supports work in progress at the University of Florida, Pennsylvania State University and Texas A & M University.

Grass Seed Production Continues in Oregon

The rumor is out that Oregon will move out of grass seed production unless a workable field burner is found im-

A publicity release from the Oregon Seed Council claimed that such prognostics were simply rumors. The release also suggested that it is extremely remote that the legislature will enforce the January 1975 deadline to halt open field burning.

In Oregon's Willamette River Valley, an area about 3,000 square miles, some 270,000 acres of grass seed is grown each year. Ryegrass, fine fescues, bentgrass and bluegrass plus a considerable acreage of orchardgrass and tall fescues push this cropping practice to an excess of \$60 million annually.

The perennial grass crops are kept in stands for about five years and growers of varietal strains must keep fields clean through rouguing out foreign plants and by the use of chemical sprays. The chief source of field sanitation has been burning the straw on the fields, following harvest each year. The heat from the burning straw has proven to be an excellent way to kill seed left in the field following harvest, controlling insects and shocking the plant into greater production. This cultural practice has been

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in vogue since the 1940's, but is now being buffeted by environmentalists complaining of the smoke in the summer

The 1970 legislature passed a bill calling for an end of open field burning by January 1975, making the summer of 1974 the last season for open field burning. At the same time, the state began a program of matching funds with growers for research into a smoke-free type of mobile burner which would sanitize the fields without the accompanying smoke. The engineering problems associated with constructing such a burner have so far been unsolvable.

The council says a "no burn" ban would cut the crop yields considerably in 1976, but not until then. And they feel the legislature will grant, at least, a two year extension to perfect the burning machines and improve techniques of straw handling and usage.

The high price of wheat may well affect the production of annual grass, but it is doubtful if there will be much change in the acreage of perennial grass crops. Higher prices for annual ryegrass during the past year will encourage production of that crop. Lower prices for annual ryegrass would encourage grain production.

According to the release, if the legislature would be so short sighted and fail to grant an extension to open field burning, crop yields would decimate beginning in 1976. New cultural techniques could be applied to keep grass seed production going, but the change would be expensive to growers and would no doubt be reflected in the cost of grass seed.

Shorter life stands of perennial grasses, burning every other year, and heavy uses of chemicals would be some of the alternatives to field burning. None of the alternatives would be as efficient as the field sanitizing now being used.

Irrigation Specialists Open Office in Westwood

New England golf course superintendents, contractors and architects may benefit from a new move by White Turf

Engineering, Inc.

The firm recently opened a sales and distribution center in Westwood Industrial Park, Westwood, Mass. From the new 1,960 square foot location, White hopes to supply a variety of irrigation components to its Eastern Seaboard customers.

Pre-packaged Parts Display For Non-service Toro Dealers

After a successful test in six states, the Toro Co. has extended a new method for merchandising parts and accessories for powered lawn mowers. free-standing displays of parts and (continued on page 53)

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