VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

By Roger Funk, Ph.D., Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

Q: *Is it true that turf under trees will benefit if trees are deep root fertilized rather than surface fertilized? (Pennsylvania)*

A: Turfgrass growing under shade has a lower nitrogen requirement than the same species in sunlight. Excessive nitrogen produces succulent growth that is more susceptible to injury from disease and wear. This is particularly true for shade-tolerant species such as red fescue which does not tolerate excessive fertilization.

Q: *We have about 50% Poa annua in our bluegrass fairways and bentgrass greens. Water is applied for the greens only. When the poa goes out in the summer, silver crabgrass comes in to replace the poa. The problem gets worse with more silver crabgrass each summer. What program can we start in order to solve these problems? (Virginia)*

A: As you are no doubt aware, *Poa annua* is difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate once it has become established. In many cases, the most practical solution is to give up control attempts and direct your management practices toward maintaining the annual bluegrass.

To discourage *Poa annua*, avoid cold weather applications of nitrogen, mow at the highest practical setting for each turfgrass species, reduce shade, correct acid soils, relieve compaction and apply phosphorus only when indicated by a soil test. Clipping removal during seedhead formation also has reduced the incidence of *Poa annua.* Unfortunately, none of the currently labeled herbicides provide satisfactory control.

To control goosegrass (silver crabgrass) in Kentucky bluegrass, oxadiazon is reportedly more effective than the other labeled herbicides but may cause temporary discoloration. In bentgrass, the recommended preemergent herbicides are benefin, bensulide and DCPA. Postemergent herbicides such as DSMA or MSMA are most effective when applied to crabgrass in the juvenile stage.

Reseed the areas where heavy crabgrass infestations were controlled with compatible Kentucky bluegrass or bentgrass in late summer. Depending on the herbicide used and the time interval between its application and the reseeding process, activated charcoal may be necessary to allow adequate germination.

Q: *How can you tell the difference between leaf distortion and yellowing on shrubs caused by sucking insects and that caused by lawn herbicides? (Ohio)*

A: If insects are involved, you generally can find the insect or evidence of its presence such as cast skins or honeydew, especially if a 10X hand lens is used. Other factors such as temperature extremes and foliar diseases can also cause growth distortions and discoloration and should be considered when diagnosing a problem.

Q: *A client would like us to plant several apple trees and use the fruit for both eating and cooking. Can you recommend a variety that will grow in our area. We need the information in time for planting this spring. (Ohio)*

A: The following chart, compiled by Dr. Richard Miller, Extension Entomologist at Ohio State University, and published in *Bug Dope* in 1977, should be helpful in selecting varieties suitable to the needs of the home owner planning to plant apple trees.

Send your questions or comments to: Vegetation Management c/o WEEDS TREES & TURF, 757 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017. Leave at least two months for Roger Funk's response in this column.

Cultivar	Approx. Harvest	Eating	Salad	Sauce	Baking	Freezing
Wealthy	9/1	Fair	Fair[c]	Good	Fair[t]	Fair[ct]
Jonamac	9/10	Excellent		No Information		
McIntosh	9/12	Good	Good[c]	Fair[ct]	Fair[t]	Poor[ct]
Spartan	9/28	Excellent	Good[c]	Fair[ct]	No inf.	Fair[ct]
Cortland	9/28	Excellent	Excellent	Fair[ct]	Good	Fair[ct]
Macoun	10/6	Excellent	Good[c]	Fair[ct]	Poor[ct]	Poor[ct]
R.I. Greening	10/3	Poor	Fair[c]	Good	Good	Good
Jonathan	10/6	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good
Twenty Ounce	10/6	Fair	Good	Excellent	Good	Good
Empire	10/6	Excellent	Good	Fair[c]	?	Good
Northern Spy	10/8	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Red Delicious	10/9	Good	Fair[ft]	Poor[cft]	Poor[ft]	Poor[cft]
Jonagold	10/12	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
Golden Delicious	10/15	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good
Idared	10/15	Fair	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Good
Rome	10/22	Poor	Good[f]	Good[c]	Good	Good
Mutsu	10/22	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

The letter c = color, f = flavor, and t = texture.