

ONE WEEK TURF COURSES AT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

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THE FIRST turf course at the New Jersey College of Agriculture of Rutgers University was given twenty-six years ago. A one-week course has been offered each year since then, except for three years during World War II.

The stimulus for the first course was received from serious turf failures that were occurring in the 1928 era. The general aims of the course have been to impart fundamental information, present new ideas and techniques and offer a medium for the exchange of ideas.

Lectures have been scheduled on five consecutive week-days. The day starts at 10:00 A.M. and ends at 3:30 P.M. Since the state is small, the 10 o'clock-scholar approach permits almost everyone to start their work crew in the morning and return home in the evening.

Lectures have been given on the behavior of grasses, the management of soil, water and fertilizer and the control of insects, diseases and weeds. In addition, many other subjects of importance, such as safety, labor relations and landscaping are discussed. Usually, each one-week course has a central theme or subject that receives thorough attention.

Most of the speakers are from the College of Agriculture staff. However, turf specialists from other universities and organizations, turf superintendents and various other specialists contribute a substantial part of the program.

It is of interest to note that several individuals who attended the first class still are attending. This fact, along with the steadily increasing enrollment, suggests that these courses offer something turf superintendents desire.

A majority of the golf course superintendents have attended for some time, and their number has been comparatively stable over recent years. However, the numbers of attendants from industrial lawns, public

parks and playgrounds, athletic fields and other turf areas have increased our enrollment nearly 100 per cent since World War II. One of these groups expressed the thought that the golf course superintendents had gained a lot of information from these courses, and they believed they needed the same type of background.

The increase in interest on the part of these groups has made it necessary to separate the course into sections: one on fine turf problems such as pertain to golf courses and one on turf problems of lawns, parks, playgrounds and athletic fields. These divisions are made for the several lectures which do not deal with subjects of common interest.

The need for more and better turf is increasing, and the work is becoming more complex. Thus many find themselves facing a big turf maintenance job without benefit of study or experience in turf problems. Such individuals can benefit immensely from turf short courses. The demand for short courses in turf is expected to continue for a long time.

Owed to the Job

The one-week course in turf management is restricted only in number of registrants. However, we urge individuals to attend more intensive sessions, such as our ten-week course in turf management or two years in the College of Agriculture if conditions permit.

A fair percentage of the states now offer courses or conferences in turf management. You owe it to your job to attend a turf conference in your area.

Most clubs or organizations employing turf superintendents are happy to support attendance of their man at one or more short courses or conferences each year. This is good business for them, as it helps their man to keep abreast of new developments in the theory and art of turf management.