

TURF TWISTERS

ACID SOILS

Question: In recent issues of a New Zealand turf publication, the virtues of acid soils have been described. What does the Green Section think about this? (MISSOURI)

Answer: There is not a simple answer to the question. Two fairly well established facts should be kept in mind. First, grasses will tolerate a rather wide range of conditions with respect to acidity and alkalinity, provided all of the necessary nutrients are supplied in adequate amounts. Secondly, a soil which is near neutral or just slightly acid in reaction will favor the availability of most plant nutrients. Therefore, we normally suggest that soils be maintained at somewhere near the neutral point.

The theory of acidifying soil has enjoyed some favor in the United States in past years. It is believed that clover and some other weeds are easier to control if soils are acid and that grasses will continue to thrive. While this is probably true, we have taken the position that it is preferable to control weeds by other methods and to maintain as good conditions for nutrient availability as is possible.

LEAD ARSENATE

Question: Is there any value in using arsenate of lead on putting greens? (CALIFORNIA)

Answer: It has been demonstrated many times that arsenate of lead is both a good insecticide for controlling soil inhabiting insects and an effective control of *Poa annua* and crabgrass. Its effectiveness as an herbicidal agent is modified however by the phosphorus content of the soil. Apparently high levels of phosphorus cause lead arsenate to be less effective and consequently much larger quantities must be used under such conditions.