

TURF TWISTERS

HIGH C

QUESTION: We hear or read of certain bentgrasses for putting greens being called by a "C" number. Why is this? (Vermont)

ANSWER: Researchers normally code products brought in for testing. This affords a measure of protection and allows for unbiased ratings on performance. In the early days the Green Section coded all grass selections it tested at the Arlington and Beltsville Gardens. "C" was the designation given creeping bentgrass selections. Before the Green Section plots were abandoned, 254 creeping bentgrass selections were numbered and tested. It is surprising that one of the outstanding selections was the very first one tested, C-1, which later was named Arlington.

ON TOP OF SNOW

QUESTION: I missed my fall application for snowmold control and I would like to know if I could apply a fungicide on top of snow and still get protection? (Michigan)

ANSWER: Applying a fungicide on top of snow will not allow it to reach the soil and come into contact with the disease causing organism. This may occur after the snow melts. However, this is dangerous because the fungicide will become soluble in the melting snow and can accumulate to toxic levels in low spots and turf can be injured. Snowmold prevention should be applied any time from the first leaf fall until the first snow cover and during open conditions in the winter.

AND THE SOIL BELOW

QUESTION: I have long wondered; How long has soil testing been going on and how accurate is it? (California)

ANSWER: Soil testing was conducted as early as 1845 in England by Daubeny. He used carbonic acid as the extracting agent. Today, laboratory soil tests are quite accurate and even rapid tissue tests are accurate enough to give good nutrient status information. However, all soil tests depend on the use of an extracting agent for determining the availability of a particular nutrient to the plant. Naturally, these extracting agents never have exactly the same "extracting ability" as the plant itself. Therefore, soil tests should be coupled with long experience and correct interpretation before we can place complete reliability in them.