

TURF TWISTERS

AFTER 20 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Question: I have sent putting green soil mixture components to the USGA Soils Laboratory and to another soils laboratory in my region. I have received two somewhat different recommendations regarding the best mix. What is my next step? (Alabama)

Answer: First, let us correct a misunderstanding and state that it is *not* the "USGA Soils Laboratory." Rather, Agri-Systems Laboratory of Texas is a private contractor. The USGA Green Section has made arrangements with Dr. Marvin H. Ferguson, President of Agri-Systems, to conduct the physical soil analysis requirements for USGA Green Section Specification Greens. Dr. Ferguson was instrumental in developing the Specifications in the early 1960s and has had over 20 years of laboratory and field experience with them.

FILLING HOLES WITH TOP DRESSING

Question: Filling holes with top dressing after aeration is time consuming and costly. Is it really necessary or beneficial? (Florida)

Answer: Definitely yes. Filling aeration holes reduces insect infestation and can double or triple the recovery time from bumpy surfaces to smooth surfaces. Also, heat can build up in the empty aerifier holes, which can restrict vigorous root rejuvenation. Of course, 1/2-inch holes are easier to fill than 1/4-inch holes.

HERE TO STAY

Question: We have had a great deal of difficulty growing trees on our golf course. The irrigation system reaches to the trees and the edges of the fairways, yet one irrigation specialist has told us that this is not sufficient irrigation for the trees. Is that correct? (Montana)

Answer: Yes. In most of the arid West where water is in short supply, tree establishment can be enhanced greatly by use of a drip irrigation system. Such a system will help you conserve moisture and keep tree roots out of the fairways. Drip irrigation will be more widely used on golf courses in the future. It's here to stay!