

TURF TWISTERS

BY THE BUSHEL OR THE PECK

Question: We are getting ready to sprig our fairways with a winter-hardy bermudagrass this summer. The planting rate suggested was 400 bushels to the acre. What is a bushel of bermudagrass sprigs? (Virginia)

Answer: Look at it this way; a bushel of bermudagrass sprigs is obtained by vertical mowing a square yard of two-inch-tall bermudagrass. Rake the sprigs together from this area and you'll have a bushel of them.

MISERY LOVES COMPANY

Question: The past winter was one of the coldest winters on record in our section of the country. We have been hard hit by bermudagrass winterkill. What kind of reports have you received from others and what can be done about it? I'm hurting! (Kentucky)

Answer: You are not alone! Bermudagrass winterkill has been reported throughout the South, as far west as Oklahoma and Texas, and as far north as Kentucky and Illinois. Prolonged sub-freezing temperatures did a job on it. Under close cut and/or on droughty soils bermudagrass seemed to suffer more. In Illinois, a stretch of warm weather in February started greenup only to be snuffed out by a deep freeze in March. What's the answer? Get behind the long-range research program of the Green Section for development of better turfgrass for golf. This very problem (greater low-temperature tolerance for bermudagrass) is one of the major studies planned. For the present, reseed or restolonize the dead areas as early in the summer as possible. Fertilize generously to obtain maximum coverage by midsummer and then gradually reduce fertilizer applications in preparation for fall and winter. Keep adequate soil moisture levels at all times. Don't miss a chance to maximize the bermudagrass growing season.

BUT . . .

Question: The label on the insecticide I am using states that it does not necessarily have to be watered in. But I've always watered in insecticides! What do you think? (Kentucky)

Answer: As a general rule, it's always a good idea to water in an insecticide *when you are trying to control soil-borne or root-feeding insects*. This helps put the active ingredient closer to where the insect is working. For surface-feeding insects, little if any supplemental washing in is required. The insecticide is already where it should be.