TURF TWISTERS

FREQUENT INTERVALS OF

Question: I occasionally hear the term *spoon feeding*; what does this refer to? (Indiana)

Answer: *Spoon feeding* is the use of readily available nutrients applied at light rates and frequent intervals. Normally, it is a strategy used in putting green maintenance. It will often involve the use of a complete (N, P, and K) analysis soluble fertilizer that can be tank mixed with pesticides. It is very important to check the label of each material being tank mixed to ensure compatibility. Application rates often are in the range of 1/10th pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet, every seven to 10 days. Obviously, this can vary slightly to fit the specific needs of a maintenance program. The idea behind *spoon feeding* is not to push additional growth, but simply to maintain the plant's immediate needs.

EDUCATION

Question: It's becoming more difficult for me to convince the Green Committee that annual attendance at regional conferences as well as the national conference is worth the expense. What can I do to assure them it is time and money well spent? (Florida)

Answer: First of all, invite your Green Committee Chairman, or any committee person for that matter, to attend a meeting or two with you. Let them see firsthand the wealth of information that is available at these important events. Another good idea is to always follow up any conference where significant expenses were incurred with a brief synopsis of the information gained while attending. This informative letter can be distributed to the Green Committee to assist in your efforts of ensuring attendance at future conferences.

PROVIDE LONG-TERM BENEFITS

Question: The golfers on my course always complain about putting green aeration. They always say that the holes affect the roll of the ball, knocking it away from the hole. How much of the playing surface is actually disturbed by traditional core aeration? (Pennsylvania)

Answer: The information we have suggests that when using 1/4-inch tines on 2-inch centers, only about 1% of the surface is removed. A 1/2-inch tine affects 7% of the putting surface, and a 3/4-inch tine affects 12%. As for the notion that these holes deflect balls away from the hole, we might suggest that they deflect the balls toward the hole in about the same percentage. However, golfers are always quick to criticize the aeration process, perhaps not realizing the overall benefits.