

NEVADA TURF CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON DESERT NEEDS

The 1986 Southern Nevada Turfgrass Conference will take place Dec. 12-13 at the Palace Station Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, NV. The conference is sponsored by Nevada Cooperative Extension, the College of Agriculture—University of Nevada Reno and the Southwest Golf Course Superintendents Association.

The conference addresses the problems of growing turfgrass in the desert. This year's program is designed to prepare the turf professional to meet these problems with practical, specific information on:

- Turf disease control;
- Turf weed control;
- Pesticide safety;
- Water management; and
- Local research findings.

The principal speakers will be Dr. James Watson, vice-president, the Toro Company; Dr. Clyde Elmore, weed specialist, University of California; Dr. Phil Cobaugh, plant pathologist, Texas A & M University; Dr. Arden Baltensperger, turf specialist, New Mexico State University; Dr. Harry Smith, pesticide specialist, University of Nevada-Reno; and Dr. Dale Devitt, soils and water specialist, University of Nevada-Reno.

"In the past, the conference has attracted superintendents and turf managers from all over the desert West," says Bob Morris, conference coordinator. "Their problems are unique. That's why we organized a conference specifically for desert conditions."

A conference agenda, mail-in registration form and more information will be mailed this month. If you are interested in desert turf management, call (702) 731-3130 and ask to be put on the Turfgrass Conference mailing list.

Pesticide certification credits are available for Arizona and California participants. Continuing education credits (CEUs) are available for Golf Course Superintendents Association of America members.

E-Z GO RESTRUCTURES TO PUSH UTILITY VEHICLES

Determined to increase its sales support and overall distribution of utility vehicles, E-Z GO/Textron has promoted Frank Smith to national sales manager for turf, industrial and commercial vehicle sales and divided the country into three sales regions, each with its own regional sales manager.

Smith, who previously was responsible for turf vehicle sales only, will be responsible for all utility vehicle sales, as well as development of new products and a national distribution development program.

Bill Manning, Steve Cotton and Jim Simmons report to Smith. Manning is western regional sales manager, Cotton has the Southeast and Simmons has the Northeast.

Smith reports to J. Hampton Manning, vice president of turf, industrial and commercial vehicle sales.

HOT, DRY WEATHER REDUCES TURF SEED CROP

For three years in a row nature has caused consternation in the Northwest where most of the world's Kentucky bluegrass seed is grown. This year's crop is off by 40 percent. The culprit, according to Gail Jacklin of Jacklin Seed in Post Falls, ID, was extremely hot weather in June when most proprietary Kentucky bluegrass varieties pollenate.

Last year a disease called ergot damaged much of the Kentucky bluegrass crop. "Since we've had three poor crops in a row," says Jacklin, "there is no carryover." With a strong demand from sod growers and landscape contractors caused by new construction, supplies of most Kentucky bluegrass seed varieties will be exhausted before the 1987 harvest.

Fine fescue seed growers in Oregon are experiencing similar losses in their crops of creeping red and chewings fescues. "It's been too dry," says Tom Stanley of Turf Seed in Hubbard, OR. "We have had less than a half an inch of rain since April." Many crops are only half of what was expected says Steve Tubbs of Turf Merchants in Albany, OR. "In the past few weeks, some long-time fine fescue growers have filed for bankruptcy."

The perennial ryegrass harvest is 10 to 20 percent below projections. High demand from construction and severe drought damage in the Southeast may cause certain varieties to run out before next summer says Stanley. Carryover of perennial ryegrass from last year is also limited adds Tubbs. He recommends sports turf managers should buy their seed for the coming year soon if they want specific varieties of Kentucky bluegrass, fine fescue and perennial ryegrass.

The picture is brighter for creeping bentgrass and tall fescue. Production acreage for these two grasses was increased this year. As a result, both produced the biggest crops in history. Nevertheless, says Stanley, Penncross and Penneagle will remain on allocation due to a huge number of back orders. Tall fescues were least affected by the hot, dry weather. "Still, demand from drought-damaged areas for tall fescue seed is going to put pressure on the crop," says Tubbs.

Bottom line, according to Tubbs, is firm prices and tight supplies of most turf seed varieties during the next year. "Our distributors are calling us daily to check to make sure we can meet their orders," says Jacklin. "Anyone who has to have a certain variety of seed in the coming year should call their distributor in the next few weeks."



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