



June 27-July 1

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Nashville. Other dates and locations: July 5-9, Indianapolis; Aug. 16-20, Bethel, CT; Aug. 23-27, Colonial Heights, VA; Aug. 30-Sept. 3, Orlando; Sept. 12-16, Dallas; Sept. 19-23, Denver; Oct. 10-14, Davis, CA. Contact Grounds Maintenance Services: (800) 227-9381.

July 16-18

Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) meeting, Holiday Inn South, East Lansing, MI. Contact TPI: (800) 405-8873 or (847) 705-9898.

July 21-23

TPI Summer Convention & Field Days, Holiday Inn South, East Lansing, MI. Contact TPI: (800) 405-8873 or (847) 705-9898.

July 24-26

16th annual International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo (EXPO 99), Kentucky Exposition Center, Louisville. Contact Sellers Expositions: (800) 558-8767.

July 27

Midwest Regional Turf Foundation's Midwest Regional Turf Field Day, West Lafayette, IN. Contact Bev Bratton: (765) 494-8039.

August 18

Michigan Turfgrass Field Day, Hancock Turfgrass Research Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI. Contact Kay Patrick: (517) 321-1660.

Correction

In the April 1999 issue of *sportsTURF*, improper credit was given to the second image in the article "Laser Grading: Know what you're getting." The image was supplied by Grove Teates of Alpine Services, Inc.: 5313 Brookeville Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20882; phone: (800) 292-8420; fax: (301) 963-7901; e-mail: asi@alpineservices.com. We apologize for the oversight.

STMA MESSAGE

Sports
Turf
Managers Association



Do Your Homework!

The products and field systems Steve Berens documents on the adjoining page represent only one subgroup of the soil additives being researched and marketed internationally as improvements for root zone conditions and/or overall field condition. Soil amendment products and sports field systems differ greatly. Some improve drainage, while some are designed to hold moisture in the root zone. Some create compaction resistance, while some increase compaction. Some have been researched extensively, and some have not.

As a sports turf manager, you may — and should — be asked to provide recommendations on the best choices for your fields. Before making any decisions, you first have to ask yourself what you're trying to accomplish by adding soil amendments or new playing surfaces at your facilities. Is it to improve drainage? Are you trying to stabilize the soil from divoting? Are you trying to mechanically strengthen the soil for higher load bearing? Are you trying to alleviate some existing compaction issues?

For many of us, it is a combination of all the above and then some. Increasing the performance and playability of our sports fields is our main objective. It is important to understand not only what you want to accomplish with your fields, but also what you can expect to gain from different options.

For example, it's important to know what different products do to expand or lessen the soil's ability to breathe. Isn't this really what we're trying to accomplish: a well-drained soil that allows us to develop the deepest, densest, and healthiest root systems for dense, stable, and wear-resistant turf at the playing surface?

We can only know for sure what a product does to the soil structure through scientific research and/or years of trial and error. Unfortunately, I see more trial and error these days than good research. Good research is defined as a minimum of three years of study by an accredited agronomist.

I read an article a few years back by a renowned turf expert titled, "Wolf in Sheep's Clothing." It prompted me to question further the ability of a product to perform over and above the recommendations of a consultant. I began reading research papers and comparing product and system literature with stated research reports. I started checking performance results from on-field test trials conducted by sports turf managers on their fields, and sought input from other sports turf managers on the results of their experiences with the products or systems installed on their fields. Your STMA networking contacts are a vital component in this personal research.

We want the best possible sports fields, and we may need to add products to our root zones or install field systems to provide the benefits we're seeking. As a sports turf manager, you have the responsibility to do your homework to prepare yourself to make the best decisions possible concerning improvements to your fields.

Stephen Guise, STMA President
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