

# Juggling user groups

BY **BOYD "ROB" MONTGOMERY, CSFM**

**G**rowing grass and maintaining safe playable athletic fields are the easy parts of the turf managers' job. The headaches start when you have to interact with the many users of the facilities that you maintain. What it boils down to is that turf managers not only have to be experts in the field of growing and maintaining great facilities, but they also need to be partners in communication, organization, and sometimes mediation between the users of the facilities. Let's break down these three very important aspects.

Without communication between you and your user groups, nothing else will work. Communication is the single most important key to being successful at working with these users. Where do you start? First, you need to identify the important contact with each group. A face to face meeting is a must! Phone calls and emails are great assets to the entire process, but you need to meet with these key contacts face to face. The meeting needs to be informal and have clear set objectives on your end. Introduce yourself, your objectives, and find out how you can help them.

It's great to know that you need to put down X percent of nitrogen a year to grow healthy turf, but what you also should be interested in is finding out what the needs and goals are of the particular group. Sure you can talk turf and explain some of the fundamentals that may relate to some of their needs, but your goal should be to walk away with a clear outline of their needs.

The hardest part of this process is that after you have met with your groups you need to get a plan together that meets the needs of all the user groups. It is easy to get driven down the path of one particular group's needs, but if you're managing more than one group, you need to look at the BIG picture and how it affects the whole, not just the part.

Here are some examples of communications with user groups that I have found helpful.

1. Invite these key contacts to your board meetings. If their group will be affected by board decisions, they need to be involved. They may not have a vote, but they are allowed to give input to help with board decisions.
2. Many of these groups are run by volunteers or have key decision making positions that change often. Make sure that when change does occur within these groups that you are going through the process of meeting with them and discussing their goals and objectives. Just because you met with person A 2 years ago, doesn't mean that now, person B shares all those goals and objectives. Board change over frequently ushers in new direction and goals.
3. If you have many user groups, e.g., 3-4 soccer groups at one facility, you might want to consider forming an advisory group that meets to discuss pertinent issues. This is also a good way to also encourage good group communication.
4. Keep everyone in the loop. Just as you probably don't like surprises, these groups react similarly. If it be by phone, e-mail, or face to face meetings, keep them informed.

Of course if you are not an organized person, then you can communicate until your blue in the face and you will still fail. Many of these groups have guidelines and regulations that they are required to follow within their individual league structures. These need to be outlined in your meetings with your user group representatives. Generally, scheduling is the big issue with a lot of these groups as well as the facility or fields. Here is the issue: How do you allow enough time turf cultural practices but also allow the groups access to the fields when they want it? This is the \$1 million question! Though this issue always seems to create bad blood on both sides, with effective organization and planning both sides can be satisfied. Here are some scenarios and solutions that I have found successful:



**Scenario:** With a multi-use facility, encompassing 135 acres, we have issues with groups starting games all at one time.

**Problem:** It creates traffic issues that would require a wait of 1/2 hour or better to get into the facility.

**Solution:** Organizing the start times with each of the groups so that they stagger every 1/2 hour.

**Scenario:** We have two travel leagues with three youth travel soccer groups. Adult travel group, adult recreational groups, and recreational youth all play on the 25 fields we provide for each season. More than one of the groups use the same field throughout the season. Previously, the groups were responsible for providing field assignments to the league individually.

**Problem:** Many of these groups were not communicating and scheduling multi games at the same time on fields. They were also over booking fields with play by scheduling two to three times as many games on one field then another.

**Solution:** I developed a scheduling grid that allots a certain number of game spaces to each league for scheduling games. This allows us to make sure that each field has a close even distribution of games. It also allows us to build in maintenance slots or rest fields when needed.

I throw this in just to mention that sometimes you run into situations where these groups do not have the greatest working relationship with each other. This allows you to step in and show these groups that you are a neutral party that is impartial and only there to make sure the needs of the groups, community, and facility is being met. I am sure many of you are saying, "This wasn't in my job description" but if you really think about it, how successful can you be if your groups are consistently fighting back and forth?

Much of what I have mentioned above has nothing to do with turf! In fact, you will find as you increase your success with juggling user groups you will increase your office workload. Successful juggling of user groups at any level takes a commitment from all parties to work together on all three of these aspects! It's not rocket science, but it is a necessity in order to survive, be professional, be successful, and keep your sanity. **ST**

*Boyd Montgomery is Director/Facilities & Maintenance for Sylvania Recreation Corp., Sylvania, OH. He also is an STMA Board member as well as a member of our Editorial Advisory Board.*



# Inspect & calibrate to save \$\$

**W**hen applying chemicals, you want to be sure you don't miscalculate. If you apply too little, you run the risk of the product not working effectively. If you apply too much, you may be looking at potential damage to your turf, not to mention a major unnecessary expense.

Some extra planning and responsible chemical handling procedures, such as frequent sprayer calibration, can mean big reductions in chemical costs.

Fortunately, there are several ways to help ensure precise sprayer calibration, and correspondingly accurate chemical application. Your distributor should offer sprayer inspection and calibration services to help identify equipment wear issues and recommend a service and parts replacement program to aid in accurate application. Once a sprayer has been inspected, your distributor can also calibrate the sprayer for optimal chemical application. This sprayer inspection and maintenance investment can have a tremendous pay-back potential.

Another helpful tool is [www.toro.com/calibrate](http://www.toro.com/calibrate). This useful software tool will give you a step-by-step guide to calibrate any sprayer.

To begin the process, you must be able to verify:

- \* What volume the sprayer is putting out.
- \* The consistency of each nozzle.
- \* The proper amount of product to add to the mix.
- \* How much volume is required to cover the desired area.

The Toro Sprayer Calibration program allows you to check the performance of the sprayer and also calculate the desired application rate, product to water ratio and the amount of water needed to cover the desired area.

The tool contains numerous programs including: Nozzle Uniformity Calculator; Speed Calculator; Application Rate Calculator; Tank Mixing Calculator; Multiple Tank Mixing Calculator; Nozzle Selection Calculator; Nozzle Pressure Drop Calculator. **ST**

This information provided by Toro. Visit [www.toro.com/calibrate](http://www.toro.com/calibrate) or contact your local distributor at 800-803-8676.

## WHEN ONLY PERFECTION WILL DO ACCESSORIZE WITH QUALITY AND PRECISION FROM BROYHILL



TerraSport

Fastliner Line Marker

• Marks lines at speeds up to 15 mph



Ball Field Finisher

• 75" overall width



Stadium-80 Sprayer

- 80 gallon tank with 10" locking lid, anti-siphon fill
- Electric boom controlled along driver, to turn off/on



Stadium Vac

- Self-contained driver's seat operation



ATV-60 Sprayer

- 25' hose and spray gun (trigger grip)
- Optional: 21' or 10' boom, electric boom control,



Refuse Box

- 46" to 54" ground to dump height
- 2.0 cubic yard box

Even if your current turf utility vehicle isn't from Broyhill, at least accessorize it with quality, precise accessories from Broyhill. Broyhill accessories are compatible with most popular turf utility vehicles and have the quality that only Broyhill can provide. Broyhill...when only perfection will do.

Check out our Web Specials Today!

**Broyhill**

when only perfection will do

For more info: 800.228.1003, ext. 34 • [sales@broyhill.com](mailto:sales@broyhill.com) • [www.broyhill.com](http://www.broyhill.com)

Circle 135 on card or [www.oners.ims.ca/2912-135](http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-135)



# Topdressing tips

BY SCOTT KINKEAD

**T**opdressing, done correctly, can provide many benefits that help sports turf managers maintain a healthy, safe and highly playable field. Some of the benefits are controlling the thatch build-up, leveling playing fields, and changing the soil composition to create a better growing medium that is less prone to compaction. Of course topdressing is most effective when it is integrated with other maintenance practices.

Like any maintenance practice, a topdressing program requires planning and preparation before getting started to ensure that things are done right. Forty years of experience designing topdressers and working with turf professionals on topdressing programs has taught us the importance of doing the proper planning up front. Once you start a program, you want to be able to stick with it. Infrequent applications with differing material can cause more problems with your turf. The

following are some of the factors to consider when selecting topdressing material and topdressing equipment that will help you meet your particular needs.

**Choosing material.** The best topdressing mix may not consist of the same material that is on your field, e.g., if your field soil drains poorly and compacts easily, it makes sense to avoid using the same soil in your topdressing mix.

The first and best option should be to consult with a local agronomist or a university soil testing facility to explore the different types of material available and determine which type makes sense for your field and your goals. Materials can range from 100 percent silica sand to a 70/30 mixture of sand and peat, but usually consists of high sand quantities.

A topdressing program should include consistent, routine application and a consistent mixture of material to avoid layering. Particles should be screened and typically 60-75 percent should be between .25 to .75 millimeters in size; coarser sand that measures .1mm or more should be kept to a minimum because mowers can pick up larger particles. Extremely fine sand should be kept to a minimum, as well.



## WHY SETTLE FOR SECOND BEST! VC-60 VERTI-CUTTER

BY FIRST PRODUCTS, INC



THE VC-60 IS DESIGNED FOR CONTINUOUS HEAVY DUTY OPERATION ON ALL TYPES OF SPORTS TURF. THE UNIT HAS A PATENTED SWING HITCH THAT ALLOWS THE OPERATOR TO VERTI-CUT AROUND OBJECTS WHILE TURNING, WITHOUT TEARING THE ESTABLISHED TURF. PIVOT POINTS DESIGNED ON THE HITCH ALLOW THE UNIT TO FLOAT OVER UNEVEN TERRAIN. THE VC-60 CUTTING DEPTH IS EASILY ADJUSTED IN THE FIELD, WITHOUT TOOLS "UP TO 1 1/2 INCHES DEEP" USING QUICK RELEASE PINS.

CALL FOR A FREE VIDEO TODAY

**800-363-8780**

SALES@1STPRODUCTS.COM

WWW.1STPRODUCTS.COM

Circle 125 on card or [www.oners.ims.ca/2912-125](http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-125)



## 21 YEARS ON AMERICAN TURF

Redexim Charterhouse introduces the Rink Topdresser to its long line of turf maintenance equipment. Complete with rear brush or optional twin spinners, the Rink Topdresser handles either wet or dry material with ease. With six models available, there's one ideally suited for your needs. Choose from 3-point, trailed or utility vehicle mounted units.



21 YEARS IN AMERICA  
AND STILL GROWING

1-800-597-5664 • Fax: 570-602-3060 • [www.redexim.com](http://www.redexim.com)

Circle 133 on card or [www.oners.ims.ca/2912-133](http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-133)



Applying the proper rate. Topdressing applications can range from 1/32-inch for thatch control to 1/4 after aerification for leveling and changing the growing medium. Most sports fields will focus more on the heavier application two to three times a year after aerification.

Amount of material. The size of the turf area and the thickness of application will help you determine the amount of material needed.

Equipment options. Topdressing equipment should have features that can apply topdressing with control, uniformity, accuracy and reliability. The less uniform and consistent the spread the more man-hours spent overlapping and dragging in the material. The less accurate and consistent the application, the less benefits you will experience from the program.

The two different types of top dressers are a broadcast spreader and traditional drop spreaders. Drop spreaders generally use a hopper, a belt and a brush to deliver the topdressing and tend to be better at consistent heavier applications. Broadcast spreaders use spinners to deliver the topdressing and tend to be better for frequent lighter applications.

One of the important features is the ability to handle material regardless of composition or moisture content. Material with higher peat content can tend to be wetter and more difficult to spread. Chevron, or patterned belt technology with a brush, for example, allows topdressers to handle materials consistently and apply materials evenly, which results in a more efficient application. This also allows applying calcine clay to infields.

There are also hydraulic driven topdressers and ground driven topdressers. Ground driven units can guarantee consistent applications regardless of speed changes. It is important to keep units that are hydraulically driven at consistent speeds as slowing your speed will thicken the spread and increasing your speed will lighten the spread.

The most important part in choosing equipment is testing the machine out before purchasing it. If a manufacturer says they can spread wet material consistently, then have them demonstrate this. Don't make your program fit the machine; the machine should fit your program.

Capacity. A larger hopper capacity topdresser means less downtime in having to load the hopper, so typically the larger the fields or greater number of fields, the bigger the top dresser should be.

Towing equipment. The smaller top dressing units can be connected

to most standard utility vehicles or towed by a small tractor. Units with 4-cubic yard hoppers require much larger tractors. Always check the weight fully loaded with sand to the capacity of your towing vehicle. **ST**

*Scott Kinkead is vice president of Turfco Manufacturing. He can be reached at (763) 785-1000 or [scott@turfco.com](mailto:scott@turfco.com).*

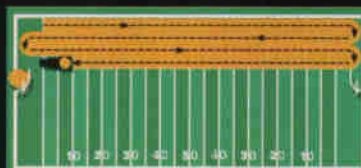
## YOUR ULTIMATE SPORTS TURF TOP DRESSER



### The Mete-R-Matic XL makes top dressing simple and fast

The new Mete-R-Matic XL, specifically designed for sports turf, features the same technologies that made the Mete-R-Matic III the leading top dresser on turf. The patented Chevron belt allows you to accurately and evenly distribute material, regardless of moisture content. The ground drive system assures that your material will be spread evenly, regardless of vehicle

speed. Plus, the XL features a larger, 2.25 cubic yard hopper so you get the job done fast. For more information, a demo, or to learn more about top dressing, call 1-800-679-8201.



**METE-R-MATIC XL: FIELD STRATEGY**  
The Mete-R-Matic XL is specifically designed for sports turf application. The greater capacity hopper allows it to make four full passes (up and down) across a football field, so you end up at the loading end—right where you started. This saves wasted time driving across the field to reload, increasing your efficiency.

**TURFCO®**  
THE LEADER. SINCE 1961.

1655 101st Avenue NE • Minneapolis, MN 55449-4420 U.S.A • (763) 785-1000 • Fax (763) 785-0556 • [www.turfco.com](http://www.turfco.com)

Circle 137 on card or [www.oners.ims.ca/2912-137](http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-137)



# Safety and Performance from the ground up



ALWAYS READ AND  
FOLLOW LABEL  
DIRECTIONS

**S**afety for players is your number one concern. Instead of ending up with turf that looks like it's been ground up and spit out, build lush springy turf from the ground up with LAUNCH® Biostimulant.

LAUNCH® combines the best of Gordon's FOCUS® and BOV-A-MURA® into one powerful formulation that encourages strong healthy roots, increased density and wear resistance. When used regularly, it also encourages quick germination, vigorous establishment and the rapid recovery of damaged sports turf, from soccer and football fields to golf greens and fairways.

- Latest surfactant technology for maximum soil penetration
- Ideal for seeding, sodding, sprigging and hydroseeding
- Contains humic, fulvic acid extract and kelp extract
- Enhanced with deodorized dairy manure slurry base
- Root and foliar uptake



*An Employee-Owned Company*

Launch, Focus and Bov-A-Mura are registered trademarks of PBI/Gordon Corporation. Information regarding biostimulants can be viewed on our web site.

1-800-821-7925 • [www.pbigordon.com](http://www.pbigordon.com)

Circle 130 on card or [www.oners.ims.ca/2912-130](http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-130)

## sportsturf machines



### DIESEL SPRAYER

Toro introduces the new Multi Pro 5700-D, the spray system with a 35.5 hp Kubota diesel engine, providing horsepower to muscle through spraying operations in hilly and undulating turf, even with a full tank. Featuring a 300-gal. tank and a dual diaphragm pump, the system delivers a constant and precise rate of application, regardless of speed.

The Toro Company/800-803-8676

For information, circle 087 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-087>



### DEERE SPRAYER

The John Deere HD200 Sprayer compliments the Deere ProGator UV. A side-access point gives you easy access to fill, add chemicals, and look inside the tank. Sparge tube agitation ensures that the tank solution is well mixed.

A standard personal wash system provides clean water for safety and convenience. Compatible with Gator only.

John Deere/800-537-8233

For information, circle 098 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-098>

### SPREADER SPRAYER

The Z-Two Spreader Sprayer lets you apply products over larger areas while increasing productivity and reducing operator fatigue.

The unit features a 40-gal. tank and a 125-lb. hopper. Other features include:

- 15-hp Kawasaki engine; 4.8 gpm @ 40 psi electric pump motor; rear-mounted, foldable boom with five nozzles.

LESCO/440-783-9250

For information, circle 090 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-090>





## TOPDRESSER

Redexim Charterhouse introduces the Rink Topdresser to its long line of turf maintenance equipment. These topdressers use tractor hydraulics to power the permanently, self-aligning conveyor belt, delivering the wet or dry material directly to the rotary brush or optional twin disc spinners. Choose from 3-point, trailed or utility vehicle mounted units with 1.3 or 2.5 cu. yd. hopper capacity.

Redexim Charterhouse Inc/800-597-5664

For information, circle 089 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-089>



## SAFETY AND MINIMUM MAINTENANCE

Broyhill's Stadium 80 Sprayer has available Hypro Silver Series XL roller pumps that provide up to 10 times longer pump life. Features include a lockable tank lid with anti-siphon fill to prevent chemical spills and a compact and safe low center of gravity. Unit has an 80-gal. tank you can see well and comes standard with spray gun, 25-ft. hose, and 3-way folding boom with electric on-off control.

Broyhill/800-228-1003 x 34

For information, circle 088 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-088>

## JACOBSEN AERATORS

Jacobsen has three new Lawnaire self-propelled, high-speed, core-type aerators, with up-to-date styling and ergonomics. The new Jacobsen offering is completely based upon the industry's top-selling Ryan aerator brand. The new units include a 19-, 26.5- and 28-in. core-type aerators loaded with features for easy transport and operation.

Jacobsen/

For information, circle 097 or

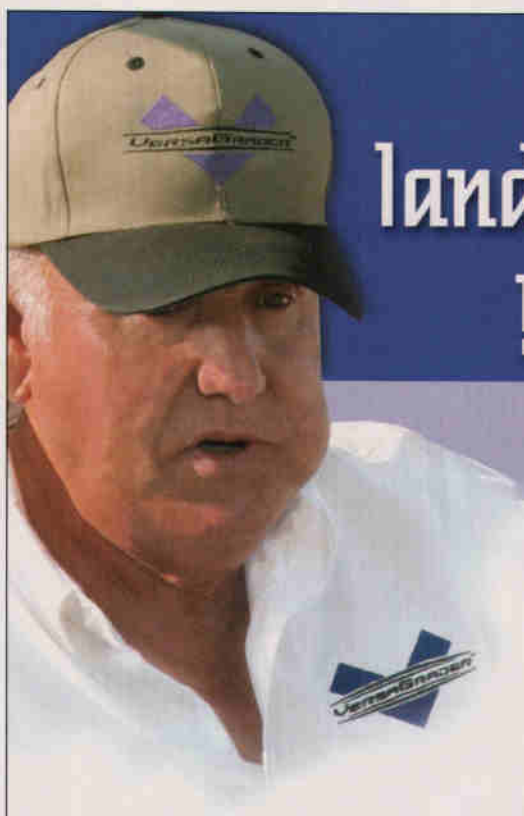
see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-097>



# The smartest land maintenance move you'll ever make

*"Get a VersaGrader and you'll wonder how you ever got along without one."*

— Richard Confoey, Inventor



Like the fax machine, the cell phone and the Internet, once you start using it, the VersaGrader will soon become vital to your work. And it's such a great value — buying a VersaGrader will be the smartest land maintenance move you'll ever make.

## NOTHING LEVELS YOUR PLAYING FIELD LIKE A VERSAGRADER

Our exclusive, patent-pending Balance Equalizer System keeps VersaGrader parallel to the ground even when the pulling vehicle goes over a bump. Level the entire field faster than you ever thought possible. Then easily maintain it with the optional rake, broom and sod cutter attachments. Keep your playing fields, lots, landscape and roadways in peak condition with one super-efficient piece of equipment. VersaGrader replaces power rakes, rollers, old levelers and more.



**MAKES EVERY JOB GO FASTER**

**IT'S SO VERSATILE**

**IT'S INCREDIBLY WELL-BUILT**

**IT'S A GREAT VALUE!**



## VERSAGRADER™

*The smartest move in land maintenance*

Call (330) 337-3439 or visit [VersaGrader.com](http://VersaGrader.com)



manufactured by  
**Sekely Industries, Inc.**

Circle 139 on card or [www.oners.ims.ca/2912-139](http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-139)





### POCKET TIRE PLUGGER

Ideally all tubeless tires should be repaired from the inside/out. The new Stop & Go Pocket Tire Plugger allows you to make an on the spot, on the wheel repair.

The mushroom shape of these rubber plugs seal off the puncture on the inner wall while the stem expands under pressure to completely fill the hole. A turn of the Allen Wrench inserted in the Plugger pushes the plug through the

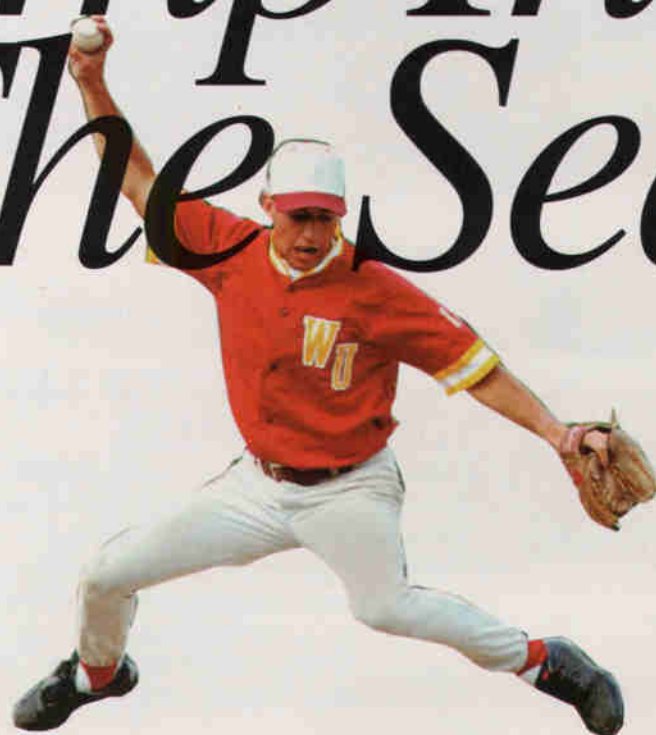
Nozzle and into the tire.

Stop & Go International Inc/800-747-0238

For information, circle 100 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-100>

# Jump Into The Sea



- Most Salt Tolerant Turfgrass • Darker Green Color Than Bermudagrass
- Tolerates Gray Water, Effluent and Many Medium-to-Poor Quality Water Sources
- Low Fertilization Requirements • Handles Wide Range of Soil pH Levels: 4.0-9.8
- Minimal Pesticide Requirements • High Tolerance to Salt Spray, Water Logging and Periodic Inundations • Good Rooting in Sandy, Clay or Muck-Type Soils
- Can Be Overseeded with Bentgrass-Ryegrass- Alkaligrass Blends
- Root Growth & Functionality Still Maintained in 40-55°F Soil Temperature Range
- Excellent Low Light Intensity Tolerance

*Providing Excellent Footing & Soft Landings  
for Professionals, Amateurs and Beginners*

## SeaIsle<sup>1</sup>

Certified Seashore Paspalum  
[www.seaisle1.com](http://www.seaisle1.com)



### JACOBSEN HR-9016 TURBO

The Jacobsen HR-9016 Turbo rotary mower has a 16-ft. wide cutting path and 87-hp turbocharged diesel engine and can mow up to 16 1/2 acres per hour. Mower has 18-in. uncut circle turning radius and adjustable air-ride suspension seat and fingertip controls. The outboard cutting decks can be raised to 90 degrees for close-in trimming.

Jacobsen/

For information, circle 104 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-104>



### TURFCO TOPDRESSER

Turfco's Mete-R-Matic XL tow-type top dresser features a mid-range hopper capacity for larger turf areas. The unit features the proven Mete-R-Matic patented design, the patented chevron belt, a ground drive system and Turfco's 3-year warranty. Mid-range hopper capacity is 2.25 cubic yards, and it can carry a maximum load weight of 6,000 lbs.

Turfco Manufacturing/763-785-1000

For information, circle 094 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-094>





### FUEL PRESERVER GAS CAP

Briggs & Stratton introduces FreshStart continuous fuel preserver gas cap, which can keep fuel fresh for up to 6 months. Product contains a snap-in cartridge of highly concentrated fuel preservative that provides right amount of freshener to the fuel tank. Snap in a new cartridge every 6 months and throw away the old one.

Briggs & Stratton/414-259-5333

For information, circle 101 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-101>



### PROLAWN SHIELDED SPRAYER

The 52- and 132-in. aerodynamically designed shielded sprayers deliver an even spray every time. The sprayer applies a constant accurate balance of small droplets that "stick" to vegetation achieving greater coverage with less chemicals. Grasshopper maneuverability is maintained, even in tight spaces.

THE GRASSHOPPER COMPANY

620-345-8621

For information, circle 093 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-093>

### HD 50 TOW

PlanetAir's innovative shatter knife technology combined with its patented planetary motion creates pore space throughout your entire root zone with virtually no surface disruption. PlanetAir's speed and maneuverability allow you to aerate around a pitcher's mound at 4mph, and create a 2 x 2-in. hole pattern at a rate of 1.2 acres per hour.

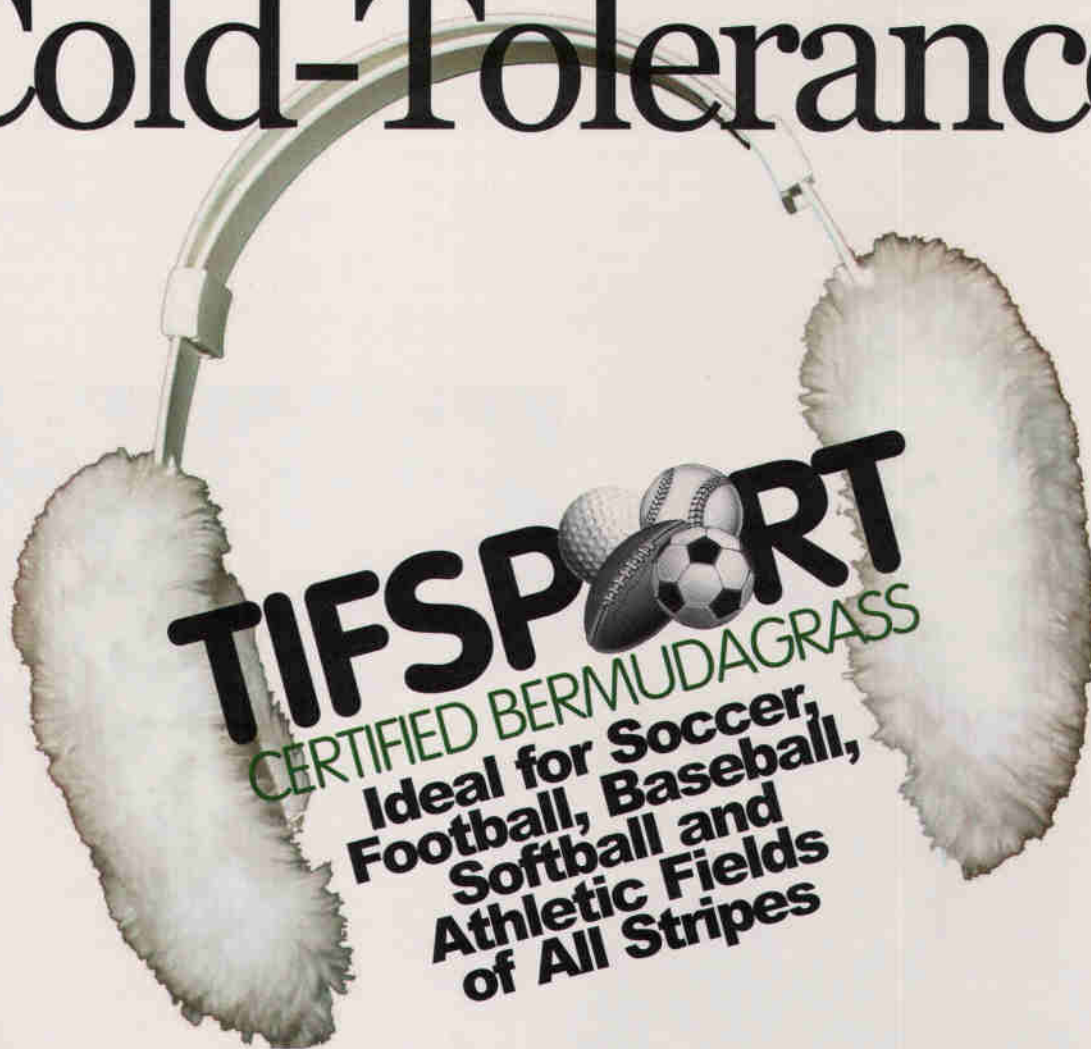
PlanetAir Turf Products/877-800-8845

For information, circle 092 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-092>



# Top-Quality Bermudagrass. Excellent Cold-Tolerance.



For Detailed Information  
and a List of Licensed Growers Visit:

[www.tifSPORT.com](http://www.tifSPORT.com)

Circle 140 on card or [www.oners.ims.ca/2912-140](http://www.oners.ims.ca/2912-140)