

## Access to MSU's Turfgrass Information File is major member benefit

### NEXT TIME YOU ARE SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION ON MANAGING TURFGRASS,

try using your membership benefit, Michigan State University's Turfgrass Information File (TGIF). TGIF provides access to all published materials reporting on aspects of turfgrass and its maintenance. As of April 2012, there were more than 200,000 records in TGIF, with a gradually increasing percentage of content linked to full-text sources. About 12,000 new records are added every year, with more than 49% including full-text or linking to full-text.

The ultimate goals of TGIF are to: 1) identify all available print or online materials reporting on turfgrass and its maintenance; 2) to provide access to records representing each item; and 3) to provide a direct link to the full-text or actual content of each item, when possible. Materials indexed in the TGIF database include articles from peer reviewed publications, technical reports and conference proceedings, trade and professional publications, local professional newsletters, and popular magazines as well as monographs, theses and dissertations, fact sheets and brochures, software, and web documents. TGIF indexes materials from government, college/university, professional organization, and private publishers. Coverage emphasizes English-language materials but does include coverage of non-English languages.

Literature in TGIF is broken into categories or LEVELS. The LEVELS allow users to search for information based on the type of publication. For example, if a researcher is looking for information on dollar spot, he/she may limit the search to Refereed journals. If a practitioner is searching for information on mole crickets, but only those published in trade or professional magazines, the search can be limited to trade and professional resources. If doing a basic search, the level will appear on the results page of the search. In the Guided Search or Power Search, the LEVEL can be chosen to narrow the search.

**Refereed** materials are clearly the most important from a research perspective. They have passed through the process of peer review and revision, with traditional academic rigor.

**Report** materials are not refereed, but

are research, often qualified as "preliminary" or "incomplete."

**Professional** sources are those generally produced by Not-For-Profit corporations as communicative media for membership.

**Proceedings** are usually from a specific conference, and can include individual articles which might show up in any of the other categories, except refereed. The Proceedings literature is very unpredictable, uneven, and sometimes frustrating, but it is an important category in the whole of the literature, particularly from 1950-1990.

**Trade** sources are generally commercial magazines, and are distributed widely within the industry.

**Newsletters** are just that, mostly GCSAA affiliate productions. The "newsletters" vary tremendously in their availability, size, and "usefulness" from the perspective of TGIF.

**Popular** publications are those intended for a general public readership, outside the professional arena (if you think these are not important to your job, we think you are mistaken!). In addition, there are

**Miscellaneous** sources which complete the literature.

Steps to use the database successfully: Log in as an STMA member, click on the TGIF tab, and then follow the instructions on how to access it. After accepting the Conditions and Terms of Use, you are redirected to the Basic Search page.

### BASIC SEARCH

Enter keywords for your topic into the search field. Instead of using a question or common language, type the most important words such as white grub control. Type phrases, such as "brown patch," without quotation marks. Typing only part of the search word may produce better results as truncation happens automatically. For example, typing "fertili" will automatically find fertilizer, fertilization, fertilisation, fertility, etc.

When searching for two or more topics, put semicolons between them. For example, if "winterkill; cold tolerance" is typed, TGIF will retrieve everything about winterkill OR cold tolerance.

The drop-down list below the search box allows the limiting of a search to an industry sector. The sectors are: Breeding

and Genetics, Golf Courses, Landscape, Lawn Care, Parks and Grounds, Roadsides, Seed, Sod, Sports Turf, and Utility Turf.

To search the underlying full-text of items (not just the TGIF record contents), check the "Dig Deeper" box.

### GUIDED SEARCH

To search using Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT), press the Guided Search button. In the first box, type in a key word or phrase. By leaving the drop box as "Anywhere," the phrase will be searched anywhere in the TGIF record. To limit to the title, author, keyword, language, etc. field, use the drop-down menu.

The Browse Index can be used if unsure of a word. Click on Browse Index. In the box, type in the unsure word and click on Search Index. A list of the words near it will appear. Check the one(s) to use for searching and click on the paste button to the left. The terms will be added to the search and the session will return to the search page.

It is possible to search on multiple topics/words by using the three "Search for" boxes using AND, OR, or NOT by selecting from the drop box.

Additionally, limits by publication type, industry sector, years, or kinds of items can be selected using the drop down boxes. Not limiting allows for all formats, years, sectors, and item types to be searched. It is also possible to limit the search to: USGA® publications; full-text materials; or to exclude abstract only records.

### POWER SEARCH

This interface is intended for more experienced searchers. In this search window, full Boolean and proximity operators, wildcards, nesting (the use of parentheses), field limiters, etc. are able to be used. A complete reference guide to using Power Search is at <http://tic.msu.edu/power.html>.

TGIF is free for STMA non-commercial members and is designed to be flexible for all users, from those accessing for the first-time to the more sophisticated researchers/users. TGIF provides quick access to published and electronic resources for users throughout the world. Be sure to take advantage of the extensive and valuable collection of resources pertaining to successful turfgrass management that TGIF has to offer. ■