

TURF TWISTERS

OVERSEEDING

Question: We have been told that maleic hydrazide is useful in overseeding. Is this true? How is it used?

Answer: Yes, but caution should be observed. MH-30 has shown much promise in retarding bermudagrass when sprayed one week before overseeding for winter play.

Aerate and vertical mow 3 to 4 weeks before seeding date. Allow the grass to recover to the normal putting condition and spray with 1/2 ounce of acid and not over 3/4 ounce in 2 gallons of water per 1,000 square feet. Spray in the morning while it is cool, after mowing. Expect some discoloration of the bermuda. The third day, little or no clippings will be caught in the basket. Irrigate the greens thoroughly so any chemical will be washed into the soil.

One week after spraying, drench the greens with fungicide and seed your mixture into the bermuda. Topdress lightly and keep the seeds moistened until they germinate and begin to grow. Use fungicide regularly to reduce damping off disease activity. One or two years of trial runs on small areas would be advisable until you learn to use the chemical.

MULCHING

Question: This year we plan to mulch our bermuda (Tifgreen) greens during the winter months in order to try to avoid the winter-kill we experienced last year. We plan to use cottonseed hulls. Is this a good material? (OKLAHOMA).

Answer: We have had no experience with cottonseed hulls used for this purpose. It is our opinion, however, that such a material may pack too tightly after it becomes wet. You may have more trouble from "suffocation" and disease activity than you would have from winterkill.

May we suggest that you use something like clean oat or wheat straw. Use a blanket of this material 4 to 8 inches thick. Secure it by the use of pegs and criss-crossed strings to prevent its being blown away. Remove it as soon as danger of freezing has passed in the spring.