

FLORIDA

TURF  DIGEST

VOL. 40 / NO. 4

Summer 2022

Cultivar Blends

Better pest and drought resistance?
Better aesthetics?

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Fairy Rings Demystified
FTGA 69th Annual Conference
The FTGA and the Southwest Florida
Water District
Fire Ant Control
FTGA Membership Benefits
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ASSOCIATION

Summer 2022
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President's Message

By Lance Tibbetts, FTGA President

It's that time again—time to address our great association and fill you in on all the great news. We have been very busy; the board and committees have been doing an outstanding job planning the future of the FTGA.

Part of the planning was revising our “Mission Statement” and “Vision” to better reflect where we are headed.



MISSION STATEMENT

The Florida Turfgrass Association is committed to providing advocacy, communication, education, networking and research for professionals in and associated with the turfgrass industry.

The vision of the Florida Turfgrass Association is to:

- ✓ Administer strong leadership as a partner organization for its members in the turfgrass industry
- ✓ Support agronomic and policy research
- ✓ Provide relevant and accessible education
- ✓ Serve as an industry advocate for its members and their interests
- ✓ Provide in-person social and networking events
- ✓ Promote environmental stewardship through its established best management practices
- ✓ Elevate the professionalism of its membership

We are currently in the midst of our membership drive. There is no better time than now to become a member of the FTGA. With all of us tasked with doing more with less, becoming involved with an association such as FTGA will provide some of the following:

- A network of peers who are willing to share their best practices and experiences
- Opportunities for practical, science-based education to help you do your job better—right now, not sometime in the distant future
- Quick access to information and resources to help you save time
- Advocacy through Environmental Research and Education Foundation to benefit you, your organization and the entire green industry

I would like to challenge all of you who are considering becoming a member to take that chance. I can personally attest to how being active in an association can change your life.

I have been blessed during my career to have been involved with multiple associations. It has led me to writing this “President’s Message” for the FTGA. The networking opportunities have opened many doors, not only for me but also for my employer. In a world where average doesn’t cut it anymore, being involved with the FTGA, taking advantage of the Turf Seminars, CEU Round Ups and the education at our Annual Conference will allow you to take your career to the next level.

So, if this is the first time you’re hearing about FTGA, **welcome**. I encourage you to become a member to further your career.

If you are currently a member, thank you for standing with us. I would like to challenge every member to bring on one new member during our membership drive. Imagine how great that would be for our association! Why now? We don’t want anyone who is considering membership to miss the member discounts for the upcoming conference. Turn to pages 27–29 for more information.

I had a conversation with Mac Carraway just the other day. We were discussing that if each member would bring on just one member, it would change the trajectory of this association. Maybe we should make that the **motto** for the remainder of this year: **just one member**.

Looking forward to seeing you all there. 🌱

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From the Acting Executive Director

By Mac Carraway, Acting Executive Director

The year is moving along quickly, and there is a lot going on with your association. After a thoughtful strategic planning session with your board of directors earlier in the year, various action items should become more apparent.


For example, many of you have commented on the FTGA's active social media program this year. Your board and staff have been busy developing useful and hopefully fun content for Twitter and Facebook—and we have just added Instagram—<https://www.instagram.com/floridatga>. In addition, this year's regional Turf Seminars were very successful, with an impressive array of instructors and content, not to mention the quality time spent with our on-site sponsors. Most recently, the CEU Round Up webinars provided additional high-quality opportunities to obtain needed hours.

Planning for this year's conference at Omni ChampionsGate includes some exciting developments in content and format—be on the lookout as sponsorship and attendee information will be rolling out shortly.

As Board President Lance Tibbetts points out, membership development is a key priority for the board this year—our industry gains strength and influence when we work together in numbers. As you will also see in our value statement on page 4, *membership in the FTGA pays for itself*, and then some! Member pricing on education opportunities like those mentioned above, as well as on our annual conference this November, are significant but are just the start of the value proposition. Please see the full list of membership benefits on page 29 as well as information on our last-quarter special discounted membership on page 27.

I encourage you to take a moment to think about the future of the turfgrass industry and the greater green industry. Where would it be without the efforts of the FTGA and our related trade and association partners? Where will it be if we do not remain a strong force for professionalism, education, networking, research and advocacy? Our belief in evidence-based practices is founded in science as it should be—but as we have seen in recent years, that is not enough by itself. The FTGA is an essential delivery mechanism for that belief—to the public, to those who are critical of what we do and *to those in a position to regulate your activities*. And just as important, the FTGA tells the world about its people, who are the real strength of our industry.

Everything we do as an association starts with our members. Thank you for being a member. Thank you! Please enthusiastically share your membership experience and the FTGA's long history of industry leadership with others and invite them to be a part of it too. Good things will most certainly happen. 🌱



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Cultivar Blends

**A Ready-Made Approach to
More Sustainable Turfgrass
Production and Management**

By Dr. Adam Dale, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist,
Urban Landscape Entomology, UF/IFAS

The evidence is clear that human activity depletes natural resources and has negative impacts on wildlife and the environment. No matter where you are in Florida or any other part of the U.S., turfgrasses are a component of the landscape. In some cases, you could be blindfolded and dropped in a neighborhood, and you wouldn't know if you were in Florida or Texas because the landscapes look so similar. There is no denying that turfgrass is an important and relevant player in our economy, the environment and the spaces where people live, work and recreate. Because of that, the turfgrass industry has an important role to play in protecting and enhancing environmental quality.

Warm season turfgrasses are developed to have tolerances or resistance to environmental stress, such as drought or shade, and to pests, such as diseases, weeds and insects. Several of the newest turfgrass varieties have traits that allow us to reduce pesticide use, irrigation and mowing frequency without sacrificing the aesthetic value and performance of these plantings. These advanced traits are incredibly valuable because they sustain the benefits that healthy turfgrasses provide while reducing the need for supplemental management known to impact natural resources and the environment. However, even the most advanced turfgrass cultivar is still susceptible to multiple pest types or environmental stressors, and pests can evolve to overcome resistance (remember that 'Floritam' was once resistant to the southern chinch bug).

Our Approach

Over the past four years, my lab at the University of Florida has been asking the question, "Can we take the best available genetics (currently produced turfgrass cultivars) and plant them together to create a superior turfgrass stand?" In theory, combining the best of the best should result in a lawn that outperforms any single cultivar on its own. My goal is to provide the industry with a strategy that meets industry aesthetic and



“Warm season turfgrasses are developed to have tolerances or resistance to environmental stress.”



functional turfgrass expectations and also increases the environmental value of lawns by reducing pest damage and maintenance inputs.

We have conducted a series of laboratory, greenhouse and field experiments to evaluate how cultivar blends affect insect pests and turfgrass performance. We have been working with St. Augustinegrass because it represents the largest proportion of turfgrass acreage in Florida. We compared single-cultivar plantings (as is standard), blends of two cultivars and blends of four cultivars. Importantly, we have used six different St. Augustinegrass cultivars to create these blends, all of which have similar color but vary in their growth habit. For example, we used standard forms with more upright growth such as ‘Palmetto’ and ‘Floritam’ and also dwarf varieties such as ‘Seville’.

We set out to answer three primary questions:

- 1. Do cultivar blends affect insect pests?
- 2. Does mixing cultivars affect the aesthetic quality of St. Augustinegrass?
- 3. How do cultivar blends influence the resilience of a turfgrass stand over time?

Effects On Insects

Most of our work has evaluated effects of cultivar blends on caterpillar pests such as the fall armyworm and sap-feeding pests such as the southern chinch bug. Compared to single-cultivar plantings, cultivar blends reduce fall armyworm feeding damage, survival and the likelihood that a caterpillar will infest a planting. We also see that mixing four cultivars has a stronger negative effect on caterpillars than mixing two cultivars. For example, four-cultivar blends had 7% less damage and produced caterpillars that were 15% less viable than two-cultivar blends. Regarding southern chinch bugs, our data suggest that mixing cultivars has no effect on their performance. However, we do find that blends of four cultivars show less damage from chinch bugs than cultivar monocultures.

As we expected, effects of cultivar blends depend on the cultivar(s) present. For instance, blends containing ‘Bitterblue’ reduced caterpillar survival by 20% while blends containing ‘Floritam’ or ‘Palmetto’ reduced plant damage by 15% compared to blends without them present. None of these cultivars had this effect when grown by themselves. We have also learned that effects

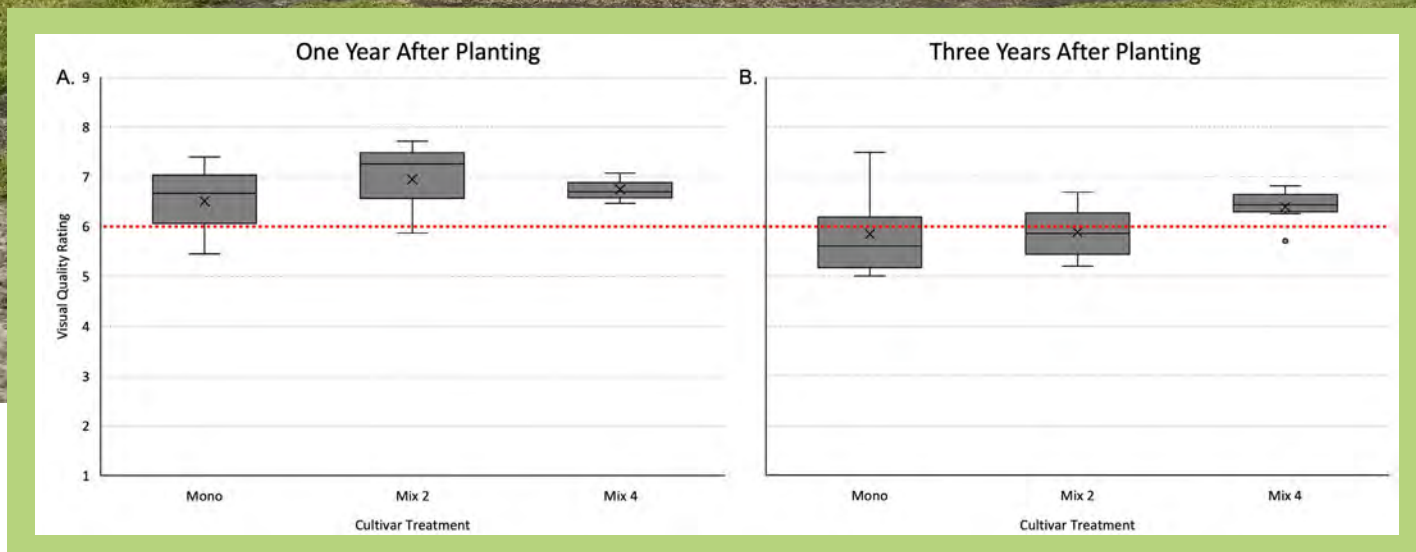


Image 1. Turfgrass field plot quality ratings of cultivar monocultures and blends provided by turfgrass industry professionals one year after planting (left) and three years after planting (right). The dashed red line indicates the minimally acceptable quality threshold.

on caterpillars are caused by interactions between the insect and plants before they begin feeding, which means that we may be able to design cultivar blends based on the physical plant characteristics present in a blend. Regardless of the details, our results indicate that cultivar blends provide insect pest management value compared to the single-cultivar industry standard.

Effects on Turfgrass Quality

Let's face it, even if cultivar blends eliminated insect pests, nobody would produce or plant them if they looked awful. Therefore, we have also conducted a series of studies to determine if mixing cultivars affects the aesthetic quality of turfgrass stands. We created a large field experiment of cultivar monocultures, blends of two cultivars and blends of four cultivars and used digital imaging to measure turfgrass density, color, uniformity, percent green turf cover and quality over a four-year period. We found that mixing cultivars had no effect on turfgrass traits during the first two years, but in years 3 and 4, turfgrass quality and cover declined only in the monoculture plantings.

One and three years after planting we also had nearly

200 turfgrass industry professionals walk through and evaluate the quality of our field plots, rating them on a scale from 1 to 9, where 9 is the best and 6 is minimally acceptable. These surveys show that perceived aesthetic quality of cultivar blends is equal to cultivar monocultures. However, three years after planting, mixtures of four cultivars were the only category that ranked above the minimally acceptable threshold of 6. This suggests that mixing four cultivars prolongs the quality of turfgrass stands compared to mixtures of two and monocultures.

Effects on Turfgrass Resilience

Resilience is defined as the ability of a planting to tolerate stress and recover from that stress more quickly with minimal losses. We predicted that cultivar blends would be more resilient to environmental stress and pests because cultivar traits vary, which may allow some to thrive while others decline. We found that single cultivar plantings declined during the third and fourth year after planting, but cultivar blends did not, illustrating that blends are in fact more resilient than monocultures.

47 Months After Planting



Cultivar A + 3 others



Cultivar A



Cultivar A + 1 other

Image 2. St. Augustinegrass cultivar blend field plots approximately four years after planting. Top plot is a blend of four cultivars, center plot is a cultivar monoculture, and bottom plot is a blend of two cultivars. All plots contain 'Cultivar A'. Each plot is approximately 10 ft x 10 ft.

However, as with our insect experiments, turfgrass resilience depended on which cultivars were present in a blend.

Four years after planting, monoculture plots of 'Cultivar A' averaged 13% live turf cover, while all other cultivars in monoculture averaged more than 75% cover. Importantly, 10 out of 15 four-cultivar blend plots also contained 'Cultivar A', yet none of those plots had less than 85% live turf cover after four years. Simply by mixing 'Cultivar A' with any three cultivars, we increased turfgrass resilience and sustained a dense turfgrass stand without using pesticides.

Looking Forward

I have avoided making specific cultivar blend recommendations because that is not yet the goal of this work. Rather, our goal has been to determine if cultivar blends may be a viable approach to more sustainable lawns that require fewer maintenance inputs. I would argue that, yes, cultivar blends are a viable approach to more sustainable turfgrass lawns. In collaboration with Drs. J. Bryan Unruh in Jay, Florida, Marco Schiavon in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, Susana Milla-Lewis in North Carolina, and Basil Iannone in Gainesville, Florida, we are processing tons of new data to identify regional blend recommendations that maximize resilience and turfgrass performance.

Thus far, our results have shed light on several key takeaways for future warm season turfgrass cultivar blends:

- There is value to maximizing the number of cultivars in a blend.
- Effects of cultivar blends depend on the traits of cultivars in that blend.
- Future blends should mix varieties that differ in growth form and plant structure to maximize turf density.
- Future blends should mix varieties that differ in tolerance or resistance to various pests and stressors. 🌱



Dr. Adam Dale can be reached by email at agdale@ufl.edu. More information about his research and extension programs at the University of Florida can be found at <https://dalelab.org>.



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A Type III fairy ring caused by *Chlorophyllum molybdites* in a home lawn. Photo by Dr. Matt Smith, University of Florida.

Fairy Rings Demystified



**“Fairy roses, fairy rings,
turn out sometimes
troublesome things.”**

—William Makepeace Thackeray



By Dr. Bonnie Wells, Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent,
UFIFAS Extension Brevard County

Introduction

Feeling like fairy rings have you dancing in circles? If so, you are not alone in the turfgrass management world. Those frisky fairy rings, caused by mushroom producing fungi, commonly occur on lawns and golf courses throughout Florida. These fungi alter the soil environment and make it unfavorable for optimal turfgrass growth and productivity.

In Celtic traditions, fairy rings were believed to be places where fairies, elves and witches danced and played, and if a human dared to enter the circle, they would be cursed to frolic amongst the fungi until death from exhaustion.

Although fairy rings have sparked the imagination since ancient times, the science behind these mysterious mushrooms' management methods is not so mystical.



Chlorophyllum molybdites, the most common fairy ring mushroom in Florida landscapes. This one is poisonous and should be removed, especially near pets and children. Photo by Dr. Matt Smith, University of Florida.

What Are Fairy Rings?

Fairy rings are abnormal circular patterns on turfgrass that have distinctively different zones of color and texture inside or around the grass ring, and often times, appear with mushrooms circling the ring. The fairy rings are circles because the fungi that cause them grow from a single point inside the circle, expanding outward in a uniform pattern, forming a ring.

Several different species of fungi can cause fairy rings throughout Florida landscapes including *Chlorophyllum* spp., *Marasmius* spp., *Lepiota* spp., and *Lycoperdon* spp.

These species of fungi feed on decaying organic matter, while growing outward through the thatch and soil from a central location, causing the peculiar and particular pattern of circular growth. These rings can vary in completeness, appearing as a quarter circle, a semicircle



Marasimus vagus is a common fairy ring mushroom. This species is most likely an introduced species that has recently become more common in home lawns. Photo by Dr. Matt Smith, University of Florida.

Image 2. *Mycelium*, or white fungal threads, of the fairy ring fungi are often found below the soil level and can produce mushrooms, or fruiting bodies of the fungi, in wet weather.
Photo by Dr. Phil Harmon, University of Florida.



or even a full circle. The size of the circle can range from a few inches to more than six feet in diameter.

Often times, a layer of white, fungal mycelium, or fungal threads, is visible in the soil or below the grass ring. It's from these fungal threads that mushrooms, or the fruiting bodies of the fungi, originate.

Three different types of fairy rings can occur depending on the fungal species responsible, the soil type, and the environmental conditions present.

- **Type I** rings have a zone of dead grass just inside a zone of dark green grass. Type I fairy rings are more commonly observed on golf course greens than on home lawns. The Type I fairy ring fungi produce compounds that are hydrophobic, or water-repelling, leading to drought conditions. Eventually the grass inside the ring dies. Weeds commonly invade the dead zone. Toxic levels of ammonium and other salts can accumulate from the fungi altering the soil chemical properties, further exacerbating the drought conditions stressing the turf.
- **Type II** rings have only a band of dark green turf, with or without mushrooms present in the band. Type II fairy ring fungi release nitrogen and other nutrients into the soil while consuming decaying organic matter. This promotes lush growth, leading

to a ring of dense, dark green grass that grows more rapidly than the surrounding turf.

- **Type III** rings do not exhibit a dead zone or dark green zone, but a ring of mushrooms is present. In other words, Type III fairy ring fungi produce no observable effect on turf growth but instead produce the classic fairy ring, with mushrooms growing in a circle.

Where Do Fairy Rings Occur?

Fairy rings can occur in all warm season turfgrasses. They are commonly found on lawns, golf courses, athletic fields and other landscapes in areas with high organic matter from excessive thatch or buried tree stumps or logs.

Fairy rings that produce mushrooms (Type II or III) are most likely to appear after periods of extended rainfall during the summer rainy season of Florida.

The mushrooms tend to come and go, seemingly overnight sometimes, which has added to their mysterious nature. If left untreated, the fairy rings can get larger each year.

Type II fairy rings can often develop into Type I rings in hot, dry weather. On golf course putting greens, fairy rings are most common on newly constructed or sand-based greens.



Type I Fairy Ring. Photo by Dr. Phil Harmon, University of Florida.

How Do You Manage Fairy Rings?

Fairy rings are not only troublesome to turf due to altering the chemical properties and moisture content of the soil, but some of the mushrooms produced by fairy ring fungi, particularly *Chlorophyllum* spp., are poisonous so should be removed. Using a mower to chop and destroy is usually adequate. However, if children and pets are present, the mushrooms should be collected and disposed of in the garbage.

Cultural Controls

Nitrogen fertilizers can be added to the soil to mask the appearance of the dark green ring symptoms produced by Type I and Type II fairy rings. The rings will naturally disappear over time but could take many years. It is possible to excavate and fumigate fairy ring areas of turf, but unless the food source of the fungi, the underground organic matter, is not removed, the fairy ring will likely return.

For Type I fairy rings where the fungi coat the soil particles and make the soil hydrophobic, or water-repellent—resulting in rings of dead grass from the localized drought situation—a three-part approach is needed. This involves aeration or breaking up the soil under the dead grass using a pitchfork, adding a wetting-agent, and daily watering of the ring only (only water the ring). This can help to rewet the soil and encourage recovery of the turfgrass.

Chemical Controls

Several fungicides are registered for fairy ring control in turfgrass. Effective fungicides include azoxystrobin, flutolanil, metconazole, pyraclostrobin, and triticonazole. Keep in mind that fungicides inhibit the fungus only. They



Type II Fairy Ring, Citra, FL. Photo by Dr. Alex Lindsey, University of Florida.

do not eliminate the dark green or dead rings of turfgrass, and they do not solve the dry soil problem.

Fungicide labels indicate site application restrictions as some fungicides cannot be used on residential lawns. Label directions and restrictions for all pesticides should be followed as required by law. Caution should be exercised, as DMI (demethylation-inhibiting) fungicides have shown the potential to damage bermudagrass turf.

The UF/IFAS Extension Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) website can be referenced for a homeowner's guide to turfgrass fungicides (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/document_pp154).

The "Turfgrass Disease Management" section of the Florida Lawn Handbook (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh040>) can be referenced for explanations of cultural and chemical controls. 🌱



Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent **Dr. Bonnie Wells** is a Doctor of Plant Medicine in Brevard County, based in Cocoa, Florida. She is a lover of all things insects and fungi. Follow her Twitter feed at <https://twitter.com/BrevardPlantDr>.



The FTGA *and the* Southwest Florida *Water Management District*

By Mac Carraway, FTGA Acting Executive Director

The FTGA has maintained a seat on the Agricultural/Green Industry Advisory Committee for the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD or the District) for nearly twenty years. Virtually all of Florida’s agricultural commodities (from cattle to citrus to vegetables), as well as green industry interests, are represented on the committee by other friends from our partner associations, including Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association; Florida GCSA; and Turfgrass Producers of Florida.

This committee is a combination of ag and green industry interests because of the very close similarities of how the regulatory and rulemaking efforts of the

SWFWMD impact our members—primarily in matters related to water usage (e.g., irrigation) and water quality (e.g., nutrients).

Committee members are governed by the “Sunshine Law” in Florida, which means they strictly observe the same kinds of rules impacting elected officials in terms of prohibiting committee members from privately discussing items that might come before the committee or the SWFWMD Governing Board for action. This ensures there is complete transparency with the public.

This and other similar advisory committees hear presentations by the SWFWMD staff, by researchers doing work for the SWFWMD, from industry personnel and from others. We also get a routine update of



Weeki Wachee Springs. Photo Credit: SWFWMD.

hydrologic conditions in the District describing rainfall, lake/river levels, aquifer levels and other pertinent information. This information is valuable for committee members to be able to take back and share with their respective organizations.

Perhaps most importantly, committee members can comment directly to the SWFWMD on proposed rules and regulations, on proposed research objectives, on spending, and on other impactful matters. The committee can also make formal recommendations which are passed on to the SWFWMD Governing Board. That Board is comprised of gubernatorial appointees representing various parts of the District's geography. It is also customary for one of the Governing Board members to

be present at each committee meeting, whether in person or virtually.

Historically, the SWFWMD has been receptive to the recommendations and wishes of the committee. The relationship has helped to drive cost-share (matching) funding to members for water conservation and water quality projects and has favorably influenced the direction of the District's research budgets.

In the most recent meeting, a key presentation was made by Dr. Mary Lusk of UF/IFAS on the connections between various sources of nitrogen and the severity and duration of red tide outbreaks. In that report, Dr. Lusk confirmed that a red tide is a deep-water phenomenon and that it may be adversely impacted by coastal nutrients

coming from many sources including the following: atmospheric deposition, wild and domestic animal waste, vegetative matter (including grass clippings), reclaimed water, septic and sewer discharges, and fertilizer. Further, Dr. Lusk recommended the improvement of the various filter systems in the urban environment, including stormwater retention/detention ponds which appear to perform well below their intended design standards. She indicated in this and other recent research that **fertilizer ordinances alone do not appear to impact urban nutrient loading**, and that a much more holistic approach is needed – along with additional research to support such an approach.

This is a critical matter and just one example which clearly illustrates the importance of the industry’s involvement in the committee and related matters, **and it further illustrates the value that your membership in the FTGA brings to you.** 🌱



Mac Carraway also serves as Executive Director of the Environmental Research & Education Foundation. Be sure to catch his amazing wildlife photography on Saturdays by following FTGA feeds on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Our handle is @FloridaTGA on all three feeds.

ADVOCACY TALKING POINTS

Local governments exploit their home rule authority to regulate the green industry unfairly and unscientifically.

There are no checks and balances on local government regulation and overreach.

The green industry is routinely scapegoated to cover for local government failures and inactions to address root causes.

Environmental activists enable local governments for their own financial benefit.

It will take action and involvement by everyone in the green industry to push back on these harmful outcomes.



Support your industry through science-based environmental policy
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Rainbow River. Weeki Wachee Springs.
Photo Credit: SWFWMD.

Florida Statute Codifies Golf Course Management Practices Backed by UF/IFAS Turfgrass Science

By Kirsten Romaguera, University of Florida



Advocacy at work: Industry professionals meet with Rep. Keith Truenow. L-R: Jonathan Germeroth, Lake Gem Farms; Dr. J. Bryan Unruh, University of Florida; Rep. Keith Truenow; Erin Wilder and Tobey Wagner, Sod Solutions.

Many Florida golf course superintendents have long followed the recommended best management practices (BMPs) from University of Florida turfgrass experts, but their certification process is now recognized in a new Florida law that took effect July 1. Rep. Keith Truenow was a sponsor of the bill and worked relentlessly to see its passage.

“This statute broadens the voluntary certification program and affords BMP-certified golf course superintendents exemption from certain local training and ordinances relating to water and fertilizer use,” says Dr. J. Bryan Unruh, UF/IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center associate director and turfgrass scientist. “But for the most part, it’s just memorializing the environmental responsibility the golf course superintendents in our state have already taken on.”

For the past two decades, Dr. Unruh has guided the golf industry to adopt science-backed practices that are economically and environmentally friendly.

“The golf industry conducts a water use survey every five years,” says Dr. Unruh, who is also the UF/IFAS Extension state turf specialist. “Since the first survey in 2005, water use on golf courses has been reduced by 29%. More importantly, when you look at water use per acre, golf courses are using water more efficiently. This is largely due to the adoption of BMPs.”

In 2022, the University of Florida’s turfgrass science program marks 100 years of turfgrass research, teaching and Extension work. The team includes scientists across multiple disciplines working together to identify the best turfgrass varieties and management practices for Florida golf courses, landscapes and beyond.

Dr. Unruh was part of a group that created the first Florida golf course BMPs, published in 2007. Regularly updated, the state’s guide is now easily accessible online via the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). It covers topics from design and construction to irrigation, fertilizer

and pesticide practices, and even extends to pollinator protection and energy conservation.

All of these areas are covered in the UF certification program for golf course BMPs. Under the new law, superintendents complete the certification program and renew every four years with continuing education training offered by UF/IFAS.

“When COVID hit, it really forced us into offering the certification program online,” Dr. Unruh added. Now, the program is returning to some live trainings, as well, but the \$80 online course will remain available.

Dr. Unruh’s efforts grew beyond Florida, too, after GCSAA announced an initiative in 2017 to establish golf course BMPs in all 50 states. Dr. Unruh and his team used the Florida-developed guidelines as a starting point for content development through a web-based tool that allowed states to craft their BMP manuals. They met their goal in December 2020 with the 50th state’s guide finalized.

GCSAA chief executive officer Rhett Evans acknowledged Florida’s trailblazing history in golf course BMPs in a press release recognizing the passage of House Bill 967.

“The passing of Bill 967 is a testament to the dedication superintendents and others in the turf industry have to maintaining golf courses through environmental best practices,” Evans said. “Florida was one of the earliest adopters of state golf course BMPs, so it is not surprising that industry leaders in the state were committed to seeing them recognized by law. We congratulate everyone in Florida for their hard work and success.” 🌱



Kirsten Romaguera is a public relations specialist at UF/IFAS Communications and a Louisiana native, so she’s right at home in swampy Gainesville. You can contact her at kromaguera@ufl.edu.



FIRE ANT CONTROL

By Valerie Smith, Sod Solutions

Every homeowner and outdoor enthusiast has experienced an ant hill in their lawn or during recreation at some point. If not, consider yourself one of the lucky few. Not only is an ant hill unappealing to look at, but the ants can bite or sting you, your family and your pets.

One of the worst species of ants is the fire ant. Bright orange in color with a nasty combination of a bite AND a sting, a fire ant is one of the most awful insects. That said, fire ants can quickly turn an outdoor outing, cookout or party into a nightmare.

WHAT ARE FIRE ANTS?

The truth is that fire ants are an invasive species and must be dealt with; ignoring a fire ant problem will only allow the issue to worsen. Fire ants were accidentally introduced to the United States in the 1930s from South America. They quickly became an issue and now heavily populate not just Florida but also the southern United States and other territories in North America.

WHAT DOES A FIRE ANT LOOK LIKE?

Identifying fire ants is not difficult because they have a few distinctive traits. Fire ants are little but vary in size unlike other ant species that are more uniform in size. They build loosely constructed mounds that have no hole in the top—

this is one of the easiest ways to identify a fire ant habitat. A fire ant bite yields an intense stinging, burning sensation—hence its “fire” namesake.

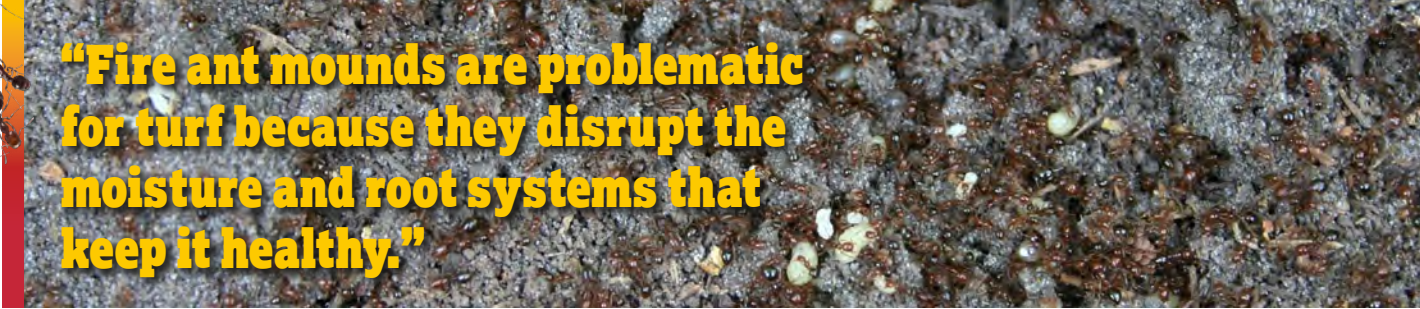
WHAT DO FIRE ANTS FEED ON?

As an omnivore, a fire ant’s diet includes insects, earthworms, ticks, spiders, arthropod eggs, honeydew and other sweets. If you’ve had a party and left food outside or recently had a picnic, be sure to pick up all your trash so that you don’t attract these pesky insects.

HOW DO FIRE ANTS DAMAGE GRASS?

While the mounds are unattractive, fire ants don’t eat turfgrass; however, they’re more than just an unsightly nuisance—they can be extremely harmful. Fire ant bites can have serious medical ramifications for humans and pets. Additionally, fire ants cause structural and electrical issues in buildings if they are left unchecked.

Fire ant mounds are problematic for turf because they disrupt the moisture and root systems that keep it healthy. For example, mowing and maintenance becomes more difficult with the presence of fire ant mounds. Also, fire ants displace significant amounts of soil to build their mounds, destroying the health and wellbeing of the turf that once relied on its compact composition.



“Fire ant mounds are problematic for turf because they disrupt the moisture and root systems that keep it healthy.”

WHAT TIME OF YEAR DO FIRE ANTS COME OUT?

Fire ant season starts in the spring when temperatures reach about 72 degrees Fahrenheit. Peak season for fire ant infestations is during the summer and into the fall. However, fire ants can be active any time of the year in Florida.

HOW DO I IDENTIFY A FIRE ANT INFESTATION?

In many regions on the United States, loosely constructed fire ant mounds pop up all over turf and around buildings overnight. Some of the many places to find a fire ant mound are parks, playgrounds, stumps, rotting logs, near trees, meadows, golf courses, pastures and lawns. They tend to prefer open areas that receive a lot of sun.

HOW DO I TREAT A FIRE ANT INFESTATION?

While there is a lot of information out there about natural, non-chemical fire ant solutions, unfortunately, these remedies simply do not work. Boiling water and grits are often suggested as treatment options, but these will not solve a fire ant issue.

There are three methods for fire ant treatment. The ideal time to control fire ants is in the fall when it is the end of the warm season, and the ants are active. With that said, it is important to treat fire ant mounds as soon as they begin invading a property regardless of the season.

OPTION A: Isolated Mound Treatment

The first option is to treat the isolated fire ant mounds. If there are only a few mounds, this might be the way to go, but consider that this is absolutely the least effective of the options. Treating individual mounds oftentimes results in the fire ants simply building another mound a few feet over.

There are liquid, dust and granular products that can be used to treat mounds.

OPTION B: Whole Area Treatment

This option is more effective than treating mounds individually but requires that the whole property be treated. By covering an entire area with ‘bait’ (often composed of pesticides and natural deterrents), the ants take the poison back to the mounds where it will then kill the rest of the colony.

Baits can be easily purchased at local home improvement stores and applied with a handheld seed spreader. Be sure the ground is dry and that no rain is expected for at least 48 hours before application. It is best to apply bait in late fall and to reapply every six months.

OPTION C: The One-Two Punch

In cases of extreme fire ant infestation, it may be necessary to treat mounds individually and to treat the entire area as well. The best way to combine options A and B is to apply bait to the entire area first and then follow up by treating individual mounds.

HOW DO I PREVENT FIRE ANTS?

The best way to prevent fire ants is by mowing regularly. Fire ants will sometimes build their anthills under objects and other structures. Remove any debris or leaves.

You’ll also want to keep food to a minimum outdoors as well. Ants are attracted to crumbs, spilled drinks, trash, etc. They also like a lot of moisture, so make sure you don’t have any moisture built up outside.

We hope these tips helped you with fire ant treatment. To learn more about insects that are commonly found in Florida, be sure to check out Insect Identification at <https://bit.ly/3cbEozm> as this blog discusses insects such as the chinch bug, fall armyworm and grub worms. The article goes on to recommend a few treatment solutions as well.

Want to learn more about achieving a great lawn? Check out more Sod University tips at <https://sodsolutions.com/sod-university> and subscribe to our weekly newsletter at <https://sodsolutions.com/#footer-sod-u-signup>. 🌱



Valerie Smith is a content strategist with Sod Solutions Inc. Based in the Charleston, South Carolina area, Sod Solutions has helped to develop and release more than 20 turfgrass varieties to the market over the past 28 years, including Palmetto® and CitraBlue® St. Augustine, EMPIRE® and Innovation® Zoysia and Celebration®, Latitude 36® and NorthBridge® Bermudagrass. The company’s team of experts offers professional insight about turfgrass pests and insecticide products.



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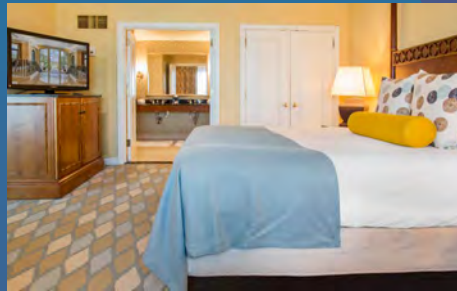


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CONFERENCE GROUP RATES

One-Bedroom Suites \$199 per night, plus tax
NO Resort Fee • Parking \$10

GOLF TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

Wednesday, November 9

NATIONAL GOLF COURSE

With its traditional American-style design, the National Course at Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate challenges golfers through 18 holes that wind through 200 acres of secluded woodlands, wetlands and former orange groves.

The golf course features gently sweeping fairways, 80 sculpted bunkers, greens maintained in tour condition, clever doglegs and scenic water hazards. Water comes into play on many holes, but few forced carries mean that this layout can be maneuvered by all levels of players. The sharply framed golf holes end up on smaller greens, making it a shot maker's delight.



18 Holes / Par 72

| TEE COLOR | YARDAGE | RATING/ SLOPE |
|-----------|---------|---------------|
| ■ Black | 7,197 | 74.1 / 128 |
| ■ Blue | 6,480 | 71.1 / 120 |
| □ White | 5,949 | 67.9 / 116 |
| ■ Red | 5,121 | 64.0 / 106 |



2022 Conference Agenda

Tuesday, November 8

- 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. Golf BMP Education
- 4:00 p.m. — 5:30 p.m. FTGA Board of Directors Meeting
- 6:30 p.m. — 8:30 p.m. FTGA Board of Directors Dinner

Wednesday, November 9

- 7:30 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. FTGA Registration
- 9:00 a.m. — 10:00 a.m. Diversity & Inclusion Breakfast ****New****
- 11:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. Scramble Golf Tournament
- Noon — 4:00 p.m. Sports Turf Tour
- Noon — 4:00 p.m. CORE & Turf CEU Workshop
- 6:30 p.m. — 7:00 p.m. Opening Reception
- 7:00 p.m. — 10:00 p.m. Corn Boil
 - Cornhole tournament, 50/50 cash raffle

Thursday, November 10

- 7:00 a.m. — 1:30 p.m. FTGA Registration
- 7:30 a.m. — 8:45 a.m. Continental Breakfast with Vendors
- 8:00 a.m. — 9:30 a.m. FTGA Past Presidents' Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. — 11:00 a.m. Educational Workshops
 - Athletic Field Management Workshop
 - Golf Management Workshop
 - Landscape & Irrigation Management Workshop
 - Sod Management Workshop
- 11:15 a.m. — 1:15 p.m. Annual Meeting & Awards Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. — 4:20 p.m. Water Issues Roundtable



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Brian Lapointe

Sponsored by



Dr. Brian E. Lapointe is internationally renowned for his research on water quality and harmful algal blooms in tropical and subtropical seagrass and coral reef ecosystems. Dr. Lapointe obtained a B.A. in Biology from Boston University (1973), an M.S. in Environmental Science from the University of Florida (1979) and a Ph.D. in Biology from the University of South Florida (1982). He has worked at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography and is currently a Research Professor in the Marine Ecosystem Health Program at Florida Atlantic University (FAU)—Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI) in Fort Pierce, Florida.

Since 1974, Dr. Lapointe has assessed nutrient pollution and harmful algal blooms in coastal waters of South Florida and the Caribbean region. Although his current work focuses on the declining health of the Indian River Lagoon and the Sargassum influx to the Caribbean region, he has led numerous research expeditions in Bermuda, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Jamaica, Martinique, Trinidad & Tobago, Bonaire, Curacao, St. Lucia, Barbados and the Great Barrier Reef, Australia. Dr. Lapointe pioneered the use of ecological nutrient threshold concentrations that initiate algal blooms as well as the use of stable nitrogen isotopes to “fingerprint” the source(s) of nitrogen enrichment. He established the longest low-level nutrient record for a coral reef anywhere in the world at Looe Key reef in the lower Florida Keys. Dr. Lapointe has published over 120 scientific papers, four book chapters and was a contributing author of the book *Clean Coastal Waters: Understanding and Reducing Nutrient Pollution*, published by the National Academy of Sciences. He has received numerous awards for his work, including the Sigma Xi Outstanding Research Award, a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Award and inclusion in *Who's Who in Scuba Diving and Underwater Research* and *Who's Who in America, Science and Engineering, the Millennium Edition*. He served on the Editorial Board of Harmful Algae for 13 years and as a National Fellow in the Explorers Club. His research has been supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Australian Research Council, the Herbert W. Hoover Foundation, Florida Wildlife Research Institute, U.S. Navy, and various counties and cities in Florida. He has been supported by the Florida Chamber of Commerce for public education and outreach on water quality issues that are critical to securing Florida's future.

Wednesday, November 9

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION BREAKFAST

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Please join us at the inaugural Diversity and Inclusion Breakfast where conference attendees will have the opportunity to socialize with committee and board members to share their thoughts. We want to hear from our talented members on how we can showcase the success of our members within the association.

SPORTS TURF TOUR

Noon – 4:00 p.m.

Arrive at Morsel's Cafe by 11:45 am. Bus departs promptly at noon.

DETAILS TBA - Please watch for information on the website, in e-blasts and on social media.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Lunch: 11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Tournament: Noon – 5:00 p.m.

The Annual Golf Tournament is one of the most popular events during the conference. This year, the scramble tournament is perfect for the casual golfer who is looking for a relaxing afternoon on the greens.

**EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP
CORE & TURF CEU WORKSHOP**

Noon – 4:00 p.m.

OPENING RECEPTION

6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

During the reception, golfers will be able to commiserate about the "putt that got away," and we will recognize winners with a Golf Awards presentation. Please join us for drinks and networking.

CORN BOIL & RAFFLE

7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

The Corn Boil has been the Conference's premier social event for decades. This year's event will feature a gourmet dinner buffet – with corn, of course! – and two FUN-draisers benefiting the FTRF Research Foundation.

CORNHOLE 50/50 CHALLENGE

Who doesn't love a fun game of cornhole? You have just 20 seconds per bean bag to deliver your best shot. Be the first person to reach 21 points to win the game. The winners of each game will be entered into a bracket, and the two finalists will play for 1/2 the ticket sales. Tickets are \$20 per ticket. (Players can buy multiple tickets.)

50/50 RAFFLE

Get ready for a two-stage 50/50 Showdown! Fifteen finalists will be drawn from tickets sold and systematically whittled down to a final few. Those who remain will decide how to split the pot: Will it be share and share alike? Or "No Deal?" Don't miss the fun!

Thursday, November 10

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST WITH VENDORS

7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

FTGA PAST PRESIDENTS' BREAKFAST

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

- Athletic Field Management Workshop
- Golf Management Workshop
- Landscape & Irrigation Management Workshop
- Sod Management Workshop

ANNUAL MEETING & AWARDS LUNCH

11:15 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

At the awards lunch, there will be a review of the association's finances and the election of new directors and officers. We will recognize the 2022 Wreath of Grass, the new President's Award and Scholarship recipients. The Wreath of Grass is the FTGA's highest honor and pays tribute to individuals who have given outstanding service to the FTGA and to the turfgrass industry. The FTRF Scholarships are awarded to college students who are enrolled in turfgrass management programs.

WATER ISSUES ROUNDTABLE

1:30 p.m. – 4:20 p.m.

save 75% Last Quarter
FTGA
Membership

Join the FTGA and receive 75% discount off membership for the last quarter. You will receive member-discount conference registration, 2022 Annual Membership Directory and Industry Guide, the 2022 *Florida Turf Digest* and more!

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (1 person) discounted rate, join for only:

- ✓ Not-For-Profit, Municipal, Trade Association @ \$12.50
- ✓ Technician @ \$18.75
- ✓ Active @ \$56.25

GROUP MEMBERSHIP (2+ persons) discounted rate, join for only:

- ✓ Not-For-Profit, Municipal, Trade Association @ \$25.00
- ✓ Basic 2 members @ \$100.00
- ✓ Premium 5 members @ \$206.25

NEW MEMBER MONTHLY PERKS

Not only are we offering the 75% discount, but there are additional monthly perks!

- ✓ **JOIN FROM AUGUST 1-31**, two (2) new members will be entered into a drawing to receive a 69th Annual Conference Full Registration package. Does not include hotel accommodations.
- ✓ **JOIN FROM SEPTEMBER 1-30**, five (5) new members will be entered into a drawing to receive an FTGA Goody Bag.
- ✓ **JOIN FROM OCTOBER 1-31**, four new members will be entered into a drawing for \$25 gift cards, sponsored by Carraway Consulting.

**November 1 begins the 2023 membership billing. Full member pricing goes in effect, no discounts are offered.

Attendee Registration Form

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
OCTOBER 31, 2022**

**DON'T PAY
Non-Member Prices!**
Join the FTGA today and
save on your conference
registration.

COMPANY CONTACT PERSON:

Name _____
Company _____
Mailing Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____
Business Phone _____
Email _____

FULL REGISTRATION PACKAGE #1

To ensure an accurate head count, please check all the events below that you will attend:

- Opening Reception
- Corn Boil & Cornhole Tournament
- Continental Breakfast with Vendors
- Diversity & Inclusion Breakfast
- Annual Meeting & Awards Lunch

| | Early Bird (until 10/21/2022) | On-Site (effective 10/22/2022) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FTGA Members | \$275 | \$350 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Members | \$350 | \$425 |

WEDNESDAY REGISTRATION PACKAGE #2

To ensure an accurate head count, please check all the events below that you will attend:

- CORE & Turf Workshop or Sports Turf Tour
- Opening Reception
- Diversity & Inclusion Breakfast
- Corn Boil & Cornhole Tournament

| | Early Bird (until 10/21/2022) | On-Site (effective 10/22/2022) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FTGA Members | \$150 | \$225 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Members | \$225 | \$300 |

THURSDAY REGISTRATION PACKAGE #3

To ensure an accurate head count, please check all the events below that you will attend:

- Continental Breakfast with Vendors
- Educational Workshops
- Annual Meeting & Awards Lunch

| | Early Bird (until 10/21/2022) | On-Site (effective 10/22/2022) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FTGA Members | \$75 | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Members | \$100 | \$125 |

Cancellation Policy Cancellations made before 10/1/22 will be granted and will incur a 25% cancellation fee. Cancellations made on and after 10/1/22 will not be provided a refund; only employee substitutions will be granted. Refunds will not be granted for not attending.

À LA CARTE OPTIONS

| | Early Bird (until 10/21/2022) | On-Site (effective 10/22/2022) |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BMP Golf Workshop | \$80 | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CORE & Turf Workshop & Lunch | \$30 | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity & Inclusion Breakfast | \$30 | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf Tournament & Lunch | \$135 | \$150 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports Turf Tour & Lunch | \$30 | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opening Reception | \$50 | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corn Boil & Cornhole Tournament | \$100 | \$125 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continental Breakfast with Vendors | \$30 | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Meeting & Awards Lunch | \$50 | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday Education Workshop | \$30 | \$50 |

CHOOSE EDUCATION (based on your package choice):

- Wednesday Workshops: (Choose One)**
- CORE & Turf Workshop
 - Sports Turf Tour
- Thursday AM Workshops: (Choose One)**
- Athletic Field Management
 - Golf Management Workshop
 - Landscape & Irrigation Management Workshop
 - Sod Management Workshop
- Thursday PM Workshop:**
- Water Issues Roundtable

GOLF REGISTRATION:

| | Handicap | Scramble |
|----------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Player 1 _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Player 2 _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Player 3 _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Player 4 _____ | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

CALCULATION INFORMATION

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Package # _____ | Total \$ _____ |
| À La Carte Options _____ | Total \$ _____ |
| GRAND TOTAL | \$ _____ |

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Check # _____
OR Credit Card # _____
Exp. Date _____ Security Code _____
Billing City/State/ZIP _____

SUBMIT REGISTRATION FORM AND PAYMENT TO:

Contact: Heather Russo Berg
(863) 688-9413 | heather@ftga.org

Mail Registration:
Florida Turfgrass Association
PO Box 14836, Bradenton FL 34280

Online Registration:
www.FTGA.org - on the homepage under Calendar

PHONE REGISTRATIONS ARE NOT PERMITTED.



BE SURE TO
CHOOSE YOUR:

- ✓ PACKAGE(S)
- ✓ MEAL(S)
- ✓ EDUCATION WORKSHOP(S)
- ✓ GOLF HANDICAP

Or the registration form will be returned!

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

MEMBERSHIP IN THE FLORIDA TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION PAYS FOR ITSELF!



MISSION STATEMENT

The Florida Turfgrass Association is committed to providing advocacy, communication, education, networking and research for professionals in and associated with the turfgrass industry.

The vision of the Florida Turfgrass Association is to:

- ✓ Administer strong leadership as a partner organization for its members in the turfgrass industry
- ✓ Support agronomic and policy research
- ✓ Provide relevant and accessible education
- ✓ Serve as an industry advocate for its members and their interests
- ✓ Provide in-person social and networking events
- ✓ Promote environmental stewardship through its established best management practices
- ✓ Elevate the professionalism of its membership

THE COST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

| INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP | | | GROUP MEMBERSHIP | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|--------|----------------------|-------|---------|------------------------|
| SPECIAL ¹ | TECHNICIAN | ACTIVE | SPECIAL ² | BASIC | PREMIUM | PREMIUM PLUS |
| \$50 | \$75 | \$225 | \$50 | \$200 | \$165 | 1st Member: \$117 |
| | | | \$35 | \$150 | \$100 | Add'l Members: \$75 |

PLUS THE VALUE YOU RECEIVE

| | |
|---|------|
| <i>Florida Turf Digest</i> magazine & Annual Directory and Industry Guide | \$65 |
| Turf Seminar Discount | \$35 |
| Annual Conference Discount | \$75 |
| Social Media News Feeds | \$10 |
| EREF Annual Advocacy Contribution* | \$5 |

ADD UP TO BENEFITS THAT ARE PRICELESS!

EDUCATION BENEFITS

For you, your staff and your company:

Knowledge, training, performance, and efficiency benefits arising from focused education offerings at Turf Seminars and the Annual Conference.

INDUSTRY BENEFITS

For you and your company:

- Networking, Social Engagement and FUN

For your children:

- FTGA Annual Legacy Scholarships

For you, your industry and its future:

- FTRF Industry Research
- FTRF Annual Industry Scholarships
- FTRF Emergency Benevolence Fund

(1) Includes the maximum membership cost among the following categories:
Not-for-Profit / Association / Municipal / Academic / Extension – \$50
Retired – \$30
Student – FREE

(2) Includes Not-for-Profit, Association and Municipal.

* Based on 1,000 individual membership head count.

Become a New Member Today!



Marketplace

Ideas, People, Events, Products, Promotions, Sound Bytes, Etc.

UNsung HERO SPOTLIGHT



Bonnie Wells, DPM, Brevard County

Dr. Bonnie Wells is the University of Florida/IFAS Extension commercial horticulture agent in Brevard County. Her specialization is sustainable commercial

plant production with areas of expertise in integrated management, plant health diagnostics, pesticide safety and stewardship, and tree health management. Much of Dr. Wells' efforts focus on delivering Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs to the turfgrass and landscape management industries through the Space Coast Golf and Turf Association. In addition, her programming provides opportunities for pest management and green industry professionals to secure and maintain licenses and certifications that ensure safety, stewardship, compliance and excellence in the workforce. Dr. Wells' programming also focuses on invasive species management, urban farming and beekeeping. She is an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist® and a Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Certified Professional. Dr. Wells has been an active FTGA member since 2019 and frequently speaks at FTGA regional seminars, annual meetings and CEU Round Ups.

Dr. Wells received her doctorate from the University of Florida and chose the plant medicine program (DPM) because of its interdisciplinary nature and integrated approach to plant health management. You may be wondering exactly what a DPM is. It stands for Doctor of Plant Medicine. Dr. Wells explains more about her choice of doctorate, "I had plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology, but I began to struggle with the idea of choosing one crop and one disease to focus my studies on. The DPM curriculum covered it all—all the crucial factors that affect the health of all plants in our biodiverse environment. That was very exciting to me! I also liked the fact that when training plant doctors, the program focused on holistic and integrated solutions that ensure the health of not only plants, but also people and the environment.

"[Dr. Wells is] inspired and motivated by nature's biodiversity," she says, "and [is] especially fond of moths, mushrooms and palm trees." When not working to improve the profitability and sustainability of the horticultural industry in Brevard County and beyond, she enjoys patio time with her husband, two boys and three cats at home in Oviedo.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Dr. Wells for assisting us each year as our pest issue guest editor as well as for her excellent contributions to *Florida Turf Digest* and to the association's educational programs.

FTGA NEWS



FTGA Social Media

Our social media is up and running at full speed and going strong. We've added a third platform—Instagram. @floridatga is our handle at Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Please help us by following, liking, retweeting and sharing our content. If you have posts you want shared, tag us, and we'll like and/or share it if we see it.

FTGA Membership Drive

The FTGA membership drive is off and running! See page 29 for complete details. If you don't know already, a membership in the FTGA pays for itself in member discounts to the association's education and networking benefits throughout the year, its magazine, its annual directory, plus the extensive economic and qualitative benefits that education, networking, and industry advocacy bring to you and your company. And as for timing, what better time to start the drive than while everyone is gearing up for the Annual FTGA Conference this November? During the drive, new memberships for the balance of 2022 are available at a 75% discount! No way you say?! Yes, way! See page 27 for details on the fourth-quarter membership special.

FTGA President Lance Tibbetts has also extended a personal challenge to each member to help recruit JUST ONE NEW MEMBER. Imagine the strength we would project on behalf of our industry if everyone meets that challenge. Please use hashtag #justonemember when posting online. Your commitment and enthusiasm can make all the difference. Thank you!

What Do FTGA Members Get for Their FTRF Scholarship Donations?

The FTGA Annual Conference is also a fundraiser for the Florida Research Turfgrass Foundation (FTRF). FTGA donates proceeds from the 50/50 Cash Raffle at the Corn Boil to the FTRF. A portion of the foundation's annual disbursements fund turf and legacy higher-education scholarships. If you are wondering what kind of ROI you receive from the FTRF scholarships, we offer two examples of recent recipients who have embarked on turfgrass professions in Florida.

With your help, we can continue to help students prepare for a career in the turfgrass industry, while we add more qualified graduates to the pool of prospective employees. That's a win/win even if you don't win the raffle.



Jamie Buhlman, agricultural assistant, University of Florida, teaches identification of St. Augustine cultivars.



Mark Kann, Florida territory manager, Sod Solutions, and Dave Dymond, Lake Jem Farms in Deseret.

PEOPLE & ACCOLADES

Dr. Kevin Kenworthy Racks Up Another Honor!

Congratulations to Dr. Kenworthy, who will receive the Crop Science Society of America's Teaching Award. Dr. J. Bryan Unruh made the announcement on Twitter.



Robby Clemenzi is the New Sales Director at Harrell's

FTGA Past President Robby Clemenzi has been named Sales Director at Harrell's LLC. Robby comes to his new position with a wealth of sales experience. He was previously with FMC and Bayer. Congratulations, Robby, on your new position.



Sean McNerney is the New Director of Sales at Howard

FTGA member Sean McNerney has been named director of sales for Howard Fertilizer and Chemical Company's Turf and Ornamental Division. His previous experience ranges from sales positions at Bayer to golf course superintendent. Congratulations, Sean, on your position.

Greg Pheneger Moves to BrightView Golf

After 29 years as a golf course superintendent, FTGA Past President Greg Pheneger has moved to a new position. He made the announcement on Twitter. Congratulations, Greg.



Shaun O'Brien Retires From Duda Farm After Four Decades

Shaun O'Brien, farm manager at Duda Sod's Lake Placid farm, will retire after 42 years of working for the company. Duda Sod is a division of Duda & Sons Inc., and Shaun has overseen their largest sod location for the past 12 years. View the entire article at <https://bit.ly/3JkbDNs>. Hat tip to Mark Kann for letting us know. Your friends at FTGA wish you all the best in your retirement.

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Profile Products' Brian Patterson to Serve on FFAA Board of Directors

Profile Products' Vice President of Florikan® Brian Patterson was elected to serve as 2022–23 chairman of the Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association (FFAA; <https://ffaa.org/>) board of directors. Elected at the association's 90th annual meeting, he will serve a one-year term on the 15-member board.

FFAA is an organization dedicated to educating about and encouraging the responsible use of fertilizers and pesticides in Florida. Over the years, FFAA's primary focus has shifted from research to lobbying for science-based fertilizer and agrichemical regulations. Today, FFAA represents fertilizer and limestone distributors, and agrichemical and ag biotech manufacturers.

Read the full press release at <https://bit.ly/3vBXndc>.

and the promotion of Eric Smith to vice president of regulatory, formulation and GLP. Most recently, Smith was senior director of regulatory, formulation, and GLP. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3JETwCj>.

Farm Credit Receives Honor

Congratulations to our friends at Farm Credit of Central Florida as one of Florida Trends' "Best Companies to Work for in Florida."



Enter to Win a Drone at the Nufarm Site



Visit Nufarm at <https://bddy.me/3Pc4ErH> to enter for a chance to win two DJI Phantom 4 Pro V2.0 Aerial Mapping Drones. Entries must be received by August. 31. The drawings will occur in September. Good luck to all.

COMPANY NEWS & PROMOTIONS

PBI Gordon Announces Promotions



The employee-owners of PBI-Gordon Corporation announced the promotion of Jason Manz to the newly created role of vice president, strategic marketing and new business development;

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Arborjet | Ecologel, Announces New Head of Chemistry and Formulation



Dr. Sabesh Kanagalingam will be the new Head of Chemistry and Formulation. He has many years of experience in agricultural related formulations. In addition to his work with pesticides, he is an expert on microbial activity and carbon sources and has worked with botanical oils and microencapsulation techniques. His past experience includes work with Agrium, currently known as Nutrien. Dr. Kanagalingam has a B.S. degree in Chemistry, a master's degree in Biomed Engineering and a Ph.D. in Polymer Chemistry. He also holds more than 15 patents.

bachelor's degree in agriculture and master's degree in agronomy in India, and his Ph.D. in crop physiology and modeling at the University of Reading in the United Kingdom. He began his postdoctoral career in the United States, where he once conducted research in the very same University of Florida department he now leads.

Dr. Kevin Kenworthy led the Department of Agronomy for 11 months as interim department chair. He returns to full-time turf research and Extension work.

UF UPDATES



Welcome Dr. Vijaya Gopal Kakani, UF Professor and Agronomy Chair

On July 6, Dr. Vijaya Gopal Kakani joined the University of Florida as professor and chair of the UF/IFAS Agronomy Department. Dr. Kakani earned his



UF/IFAS Turfgrass Science Program Celebrates 100 years!

Mark your calendars for the Centennial Celebration events that will take place October 4–5, 2022. Let's have a great showing of FTGA members in honor of 100 years of science. For more information and to register, visit <https://gatorturf.eventbrite.com>

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MUST READ

SiteOne Gives Insight Into Supply Chain Issues

By now everyone has run into

supply chain issues. SiteOne has compiled an excellent, comprehensive piece on supply chain issues affecting the turf industry. It covers raw material shortages, the labor market and freight issues. It also offers tips on preparation.

Two new factors impacting the supply chain are the ongoing labor dispute with the railway workers and the California law that applies new regulations to 70,000 independent truckers to keep them from working anywhere in the state, such as to and from the ports (<https://bloom.bg/3PfskvG>). Many truckers have said they will park their trucks before they comply with the new law.

The bottom line: Plan as far ahead as practical, check availability and purchase what you can when supplies are available. Visit <https://bit.ly/3IKjaVJ> to read the full article.



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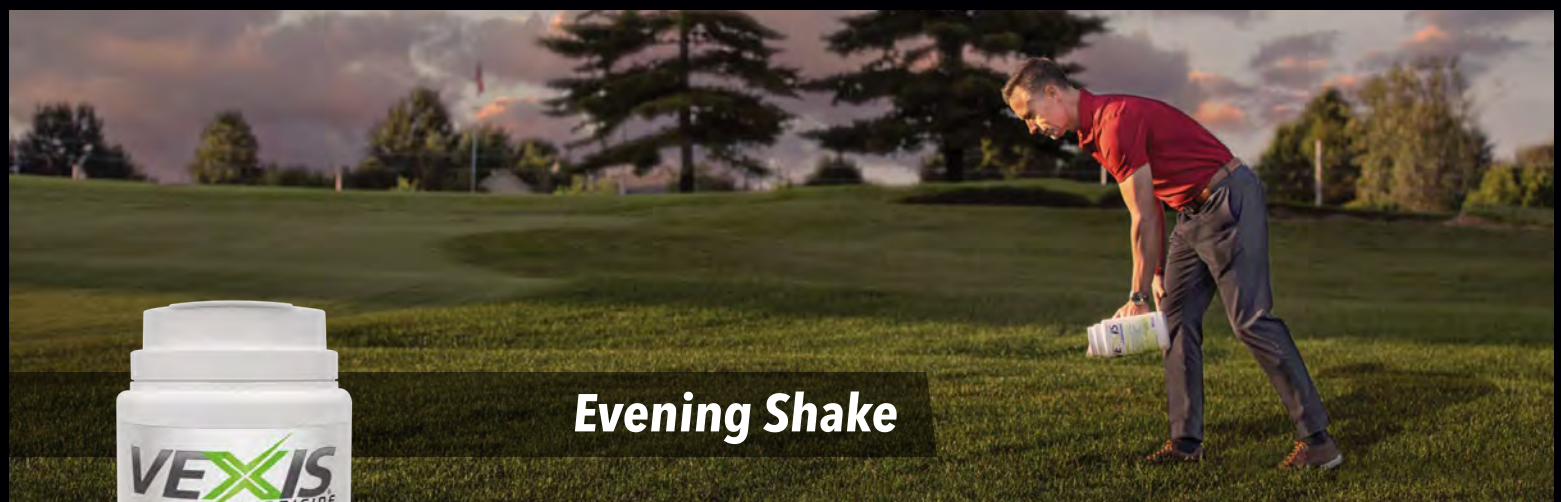
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