CORE ISSUES
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Spring poa management options

New tools / new approaches

A 2015 North Carolina State University article on *Poa annua* made three succinct points in the very first paragraph; We have been chasing this target for a long time, we have learned plenty in that time, and perspective on progress we have made depends on who you ask and exactly which turf management situation you are focusing on. Whilst in the world of golf *Poa annua* in greens remains a strong focus, poa in fairways and surrounds (which we are looking at here) remains a significant challenge on its own. Acknowledging this, the new product described in this note represents one further step forward. It's a small yet significant step but this progress does come with a moderating comment that consistent with history to date it appears further improvements will likely come in similar smaller increments – not giant leaps. Regardless, I'm sure you would agree progress is always welcome.

The power of Poa annua genetics

Poa annua has shown itself to be highly genetically plastic. Its ability to change its genetic composition in response to different selective pressures is truly impressive. Whether it be through physical anatomy, chemical detoxification or annual v perennial lifecycles, it has shown a remarkable ability to evolve to meet most challenges we have thrown at it. This is a true example of Charles Darwins theory in real-time. Of course it's not the only example, we have a number of weeds we deal with that have shown up in our resistance considerations, but the focus given to poa in the professional turf management arena, and the measures we take to eradicate it, regulate it, or somehow put it at a competitive disadvantage to provide a co-habiting turf a more unobstructed opportunity make this a very central figure in our collective thinking.

Fairways and surrounds Poa management to date

When we look at poa chemical options to date, we see reality delivering either a pre-emergent focus with a post em clean up plan for escapes, or a post emergent focus using a narrow base of chemistries. For pre-em approaches the Group D options have dominated, group G appears occasionally in specific circumstances and one of the historic Group K options (Propyzamide) was later moved to Group D through functional similarity so we were narrow in our base there too. We have certainly had a more recent (and very welcome) addition with Indaziflam (Group O) to get another mode of action in the mix but the bulk of treatment in the last 10 years would clearly be the D's.

For the post-ems the group B's have been given a decent run. When first introduced these chemistries were superb. Quite different in the way they were slow moving, low dose types with unusual activity spectrums that could cover anything from broad leaves to grasses to sedges. Poa was a common target across many and there were many happy turf managers with these exceptional tools.