

HIGHLIGHTS

NTEP Policy Committee Meeting

June 22-23, 2007

Lexington, Kentucky

Committee Members Present –

Chris McDowell (representing ASTA, Lawn Seed Division)

Jeff Nus (representing USGA)

David Williams (representing SERA-IEG-25; southern region universities)

Steve Johnson (representing Turfgrass Breeders Association)

Duane Klundt (representing OSTA, PSA and other allied seed associations)

Warren Bell (representing Turfgrass Producers International)

David Kopec for Bernd Leinauer (representing WRCC-11; western region universities)

Kevin Morris (NTEP Executive Director)

Jim Murphy (representing northeast region universities)

Clark Throssell (representing GCSAA)

Tom Voigt for Brian Horgan (representing NCR-192; north central universities)

2007 Warm-Season Grass Tests

Vegetative and seeded entries in the 2007 Bermudagrass, Zoysiagrass, St. Augustinegrass and Seashore Paspalum Tests were mailed to cooperators in late June. The list of entries and trial locations can be found on the NTEP web site (www.ntep.org/newsroom.htm). There have not been any major problems reported with any trial locations.

2008 Bentgrass and Fine Fescue Tests

Fall 2008 will feature new trials of bentgrass for putting greens, bentgrass for fairway/tee and fineleaf fescue. Questionnaires will be mailed to potential cooperators and sponsors in fall 2007.

Potential New Trials

The Policy Committee is discussing what new trials may be of interest to NTEP, sponsors and end users. The following trials are currently under consideration:

1. An on-site fairway bentgrass trial (planted on golf course fairways). This would have to be in conjunction with USGA and GCSAA.
2. A traffic tolerance trial at several locations. We would like to partner with STMA on this trial.
3. Stress tolerance trials targeting specific stresses, i.e. salt tolerance, drought, etc.

NTEP Trial Site Visits

Kevin Morris and Dr. Jeff Krans have been conducting in-depth site visits of NTEP trial sites. The purpose of these visits are to evaluate the condition of the trials, talk to researchers about any problems they may be having, questions, etc. and to discuss evaluation philosophy.

The Policy Committee decided to require that Kevin and Jeff both write site visit reports, complete a site evaluation grading worksheet and a draft a letter to the cooperator about the visit. These three documents are to be sent to the cooperator after the visit with a copy being sent to the Policy Committee.

Trial Location Correlations

A series of statistical correlations was conducted on several recently completed NTEP trials. The purpose of this exercise was to determine if any particular location or locations varied significantly from other locations in their evaluations. This was undertaken to determine if any bias existed among cooperators in their ratings, particularly the locations with turfgrass breeding programs. A summary of this analysis can be found on the NTEP web site (www.ntep.org/newsroom.htm).

Improving NTEP Data Collection/Analysis

NTEP has been working for some time on improving its data collection procedures, better training of its cooperators and more appropriate data analysis techniques. On the data collection and training aspect, Dr. Jeff Krans has been surveying NTEP cooperators on their turfgrass plot evaluation philosophy. These results are being prepared for future publication on the Applied Turfgrass Science web site (editors note: the article has recently been published – please contact NTEP for a copy of the article). NTEP and the Crop Science Society of America (C5 division) will work on developing a more thorough, detailed turfgrass evaluation procedures manual.

Another aspect of data collection is the potential to automate the process. To that end, Kevin will invite both Mike Richardson (University of Arkansas) and Tom Fermanian (University of Illinois) to make presentations regarding their efforts to use automated data collection systems for turf evaluations. This information will be presented at the NTEP Policy Committee Orlando meeting in February.

Concerning data analysis, Dr. Scott Ebdon (UMass) has been working on an improved method to analyze NTEP data. This project is in its final stages as 2007 is the final year for field data collection. Results will be available in mid-2008.

Budget and Finances

It appears that NTEP will show a small surplus for FY2006-07 instead of the projected deficit of about \$40,000. A budget analysis and financial plan is in place to help NTEP improve its financial situation. Dollars are being moved to the NTEP reserve fund, now being managed by a professional fund manager, with NTEP oversight. NTEP is making certain no trial operates at a deficit, including a charge for NTEP expenses (overhead). The Policy Committee feels that over time, this policy will strengthen NTEP's finances.

New Officers

The new officers of the NTEP Policy Committee are:

Chairman: Duane Klundt
Vice-Chairman: Brian Horgan
Secretary: Clark Throssell (acting)

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting is February 2-3, 2008, in Orlando, Florida.