

And the Survey Says . . .

By Christopher Hartwiger and Patrick O'Brien, USGA Green Section SE Region Agronomists

The trend of converting bentgrass putting greens to ultradwarf bermudagrass putting greens continues to be popular in the SE Region. Courses are converting for many reasons, but early in the process course officials, owners, and superintendents all want to know what the cost ramifications are when switching from creeping bentgrass to an ultradwarf bermudagrass. There are many perceptions about the cost of managing both grasses, but there is little objective data available. As a result, it is almost impossible to answer the question "Which is more expensive to maintain, bentgrass putting greens or an ultradwarf bermudagrass putting greens?" To complicate matters, there are cost factors with bentgrass management such as electricity costs for fans, fungicide application frequency and type, and hand watering labor that vary tremendously.

To try and draw some general conclusions, Dr. Mike Goatley and staff at Virginia Tech University have created an online survey to gather data and provide cost information on bentgrass and ultradwarf bermudagrass management. Many of you may remember Dr. Goatley from his years at Mississippi State University where he was involved in many aspects of research on ultradwarf bermudagrasses. The survey responses will be kept confidential and it is optional to include your course name. No data will be linked to any specific golf course. Results of the survey will be distributed.

Survey details

This confidential survey is part of an effort to better understand both real and perceived differences regarding the expanding use of ultradwarf bermudagrasses for southern golf putting turf as related to management requirements, equipment, finance and budget, and potential environmental implications. It is being conducted by Chris Hartwiger, USGA Senior Agronomist (CHartwiger@USGA.org), Southeast Region, Pat O'Brien, USGA Director, Southeast Region (PatOBrien@USGA.org), Jeff Whitmire, CGCS (jeffwcc1@gmail.com), and Mike Goatley, Extension Turfgrass Specialist at Virginia Tech (goatley@vt.edu), along with the help of numerous superintendents throughout the southeast. Any information provided will be used only for general survey purposes only and at no time will your name or facility be linked to specific data.

Who should take the survey?

Any golf course that has changed from creeping bentgrass putting greens to an ultradwarf bermudagrass greens is encouraged to take the survey.

Where is the survey?

Click on this link: <https://survey.vt.edu/survey/entry.jsp?id=1225755675041> or paste this address in your web browser.

Can I get the results?

Yes, there is a blank at the end of the survey to include your email address and the results will be sent directly to you.

Thanks so much for your help and participation.

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