



Year End Report
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Submitted by Craig Moore

Overview

Before we get started, must note 2020 did not go as planned because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As our society managed the pandemic, we had to deal with daily safety protocol changes and restrictions in our lives; our ability to traverse life and work was difficult and frustrating at times. The MSU Turf Team was no exception, their research was dramatically impacted by government mandated shutdowns and University limitations/restrictions.

COVID-19 Restrictions

As we evaluated all funding requests from the Turf Team the world was hit with the COVID-19 pandemic and our lives all changed. The MTF research committee decided to hold off on distributing spring research checks until we gathered a clear picture on what actually could happen in 2020. As spring/early summer arrived and safe protocols/actions were identified The University allowed field research only to continue. At that point the research committee made some tough decisions on funding based on what research could take place and the bleak future of our ability to raise funds during a pandemic.

New Guidelines

MTF BOD and the Research committee adopted new guidelines for research in 2019; these guidelines were submitted to the turf team for use in 2020. The goal was to receive funding requests that followed the same bullet point format and could be easily read, understood, evaluated and communicated back to the MTF membership in a similar format. Not all funding requests from the turf team followed the proposal outline in the adopted guidelines. We will work on our communication, so we receive all future funding requests following those guidelines. This will make the process easier for both the research committee to evaluate and for the professors to submit annually.

Proposals

Dr. Kevin Frank, Dr. Joe Vargas, Dr. Trey Rogers, Dr. Thom Nikolai and Dr. Emily Merewitz all submitted proposals for funding requests. Dr. David Smitley received funding from another source and did not need MTF funding in 2020; we thank Dr. Smitley and look forward to funding him for future research.

We decided to recommend the funding of approved University field research at the June 11th MTF BOD meeting. After MTF BOD approval, 4 members of the turf team (Frank, Vargas, Rogers, Nikolai) were funded and Spring research checks were distributed.

2020 Funded Projects

Professor	Project Titles	Spring Award Amount	Fall Award Amount
Dr. Kevin Frank	<p>Long-term nitrogen and phosphorus leaching</p> <p>Evaluating the effects of soil test philosophies on creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass</p> <p>Trial work: National Turfgrass Evaluation Program Trials and fertilizer trails</p>	\$10,000	\$10,000
Dr. Joe Vargas	<p>Is DMI resistance increasing in <i>Colletrichum cereale</i> (crown rot anthracnose)</p> <p>Do Irrigation methods impact bacterial population in thatch and how it can reduce dollar spot development</p>	\$10,000	\$5,000
Dr. Trey Rogers	<p>Annual bluegrass control with dazomet fumigation and fraze mowing cultivation</p> <p>Annual bluegrass: germination of viable seed in various putting sites and soil removal depths</p> <p>The effects of dazomet on annual bluegrass seed viability</p> <p>An evaluation of new brushing designs on putting greens</p> <p>Artificial lighting systems for improved recuperation of Athletic fields</p> <p>Enhancing sod on plastic production methods</p>	\$10,000	\$5,000
Dr. Thom Nikolai	<p>Trimax mower/rolling study on fairways: measuring ball roll, soil moisture, and dollar spot counts</p> <p>Height of Cut/BMP Study I-III: measuring green speed, surface hardness, TDR measurements, pest counts and biomass production</p>	\$10,000	

	<p>Native area studies: identify pesticides, mixes and adjuvants that can yield positive results</p> <p>PGR studies on golf course fairways and sports fields to control annual bluegrass</p>		
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Research Update

An update on Field Research was provided by the Turf Team during the September Virtual Field Day. The research committee was impressed with field research accomplishments during such trying times and with so many restrictions in place. Fall funding checks were then discussed as a committee and we were set to recommend the funding of active field research. Dr. Nikolai then voluntarily declined fall funding as he indicated he has enough dollars to continue his work; the committee will not forget this kind act. The committee also awarded Dr. Frank additional research funding due to lost university funding and additional workload because of COVID-19. He primarily set up the virtual field day, helped the MTF navigate/communicate during this pandemic and organized the virtual turf school. Dr. Frank went above and beyond to keep research and communication going forward. Our recommendation was approved at the November 19th MTF BOD meeting.

Future funding will be impacted by our ability as a Foundation to raise funds for distribution. Even after this pandemic passes, we may never get back to life as it was before COVID-19. Creative thoughts and changes will have to take place as we raise funds to support the MSU turf team. We will meet the challenge together.