The Turfgrass Industry

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Turfgrass is used in many different ways and under many different conditions. As a result, the multi-billion dollar industry is many-faceted, and encompasses diverse facilities and services. Personnel range from production workers to specialized individuals with skills in many academic disciplines. They are employed at all levels and in all aspects of the industry.

Nutter (1965) suggested that by definition, the turfgrass industry encompasses the production and maintenance of specialized grasses and other ground covers required in the development and management of facilities for utility, beautification, and recreation. He further suggested that the industry involves turfgrass science and technology, business management, manpower development, and the manufacturing and marketing of turfgrass products and services.

Turfgrass plays a major role in our daily life and in our pursuit of happiness. Turfgrass, from a beautification standpoint, provides a canvas for landscaped areas contributing to aesthetic appeal and adding to economic value. Recreational facilities include an array of sports fields, golf courses, parks, and lawns. They provide the environment for athletic endeavors, exercise and physical conditioning, therapeutic diversion, and healthful outlets for a growing population. Turfgrass, grown primarily for utility turf, provides functional value including dust control, erosion control, and glare reduction, and, thus can serve as a safety factor on air fields and highway rights-of-way (DiPaola et al., 1986). Facilities such as golf courses, parks, playgrounds, and sports fields serve all three functions—beautification, recreation, and utility—and most provide at least two of the major functions. Collectively, turfgrass facility development, maintenance, and utilization represent a major...