



#### **Q4 update: Jan-Mar 2024**

As our ATRF fiscal year ends, we welcome spring with a renewal of turf research advances, and partnerships. Through the last 12 months your foundation has shared the latest research advances via education sessions to the Saskatchewan Turfgrass Association, Landscape Alberta, the Alberta Golf Superintendents Association, Manitoba Golf Superintendents, Landscape Alberta, the Western Cemetery Association, and the British Columbia superintendents. For the first time, the ATRF also traveled to

Halifax, sharing the latest with the Atlantic Golf Superintendents. Committed to assisting our local, regional and national associations, membership has grown beyond our expectations. Most recently, we also welcome the Western Canada Turfgrass Association among the membership, and have already begun planning our first joint event in Alberta!



#### **Membership update:**

Membership trends at ATRF are evolving - changing with the times for the better. Our association memberships now surpass individual memberships, allowing the ATRF to more effectively service a region vs single property(s). Efficiencies have been realized, administration streamlined, service discounts for diagnostics and consulting are now extended to all members of respective turf associations from Manitoba to Vancouver Island. Providing blanket services throughout Western Canada, each association also benefits from complimentary speaking engagement made possible through Olds College and its Turfgrass Management Department.

#### **New Staff, New Equipment**

Responding to our growth, the ATRF welcomes two new staff members this summer. Permanent Research Technician Rachel Borges, an Olds College Alumni holding advanced horticulture training and analytical expertise, will train under project manager Mark Anderson as he assumes a more senior supporting role. Brendan Fifield of Didsbury AB, will also be joining the maintenance team to ensure conditions remain aligned to your industry standards.

You may also get the opportunity to hear Mark Anderson speak in the coming months, he joins our CEU training circuit delivering pesticide points throughout the province in both public and private sessions.

The ATRF has also recently acquired a new Toro MP1750 sprayer this fall, graciously subsidized by Oakcreek Calgary. Having identified a gap in the availability of licensed applicators in the province, the ATRF chose to invest into student training - specifically training tools to help fill that gap. The new

sprayer holds a dual purpose; standard function for use on the plots and grounds, and also as an educational supplement in the Olds College Turf Management program. While few institutions can invest in such an expensive training tool with infrequent use, the ATRF/OC partnership has bridged its utilization. We hope this training tool will increase not only the caliber of student learning, but increase our provincial pesticide licensing success rates. .



## Alberta Turfgrass Research 2024

This summer, the ATRF will begin testing for several research contracts across three premier projects: City of Calgary, Sod Growers Commodity Group, and A-List Sustainable Turf. The City project partners with the Sod Growers Commodity Group to determine minimum sustainable levels of irrigation to avoid primary wilt, comparing Calgary's perennial "Yard Smart" formula with 28 varieties of sod produced by eight of the leading sod producers in Western Canada. The three year trial hopes to ultimately produce a functional formula for landscape architects and city planners to adequately design residential and commercial infrastructure, providing sustainable planting plans with adequate irrigation supply to deliver sufficient water for irrigation. We hope this model will prove as a foundation for future city planners and architects.



### A-List Sustainable Turf:

The ATRF will be sowing 36 ryegrass varieties at the PTRC this spring 2024 for A-List sustainable turf. We join contributors Purdue University, UCRiverside, NCState, Rutgers, Utah State, University of Wisconsin-Madison, UConn, Virginia Tech, Ohio State, Oregon State U, and Iowa State in perennial ryegrass evaluations applicable to Northern Canadian climates



### Turf Program update:

The Olds College Online Turfgrass Certificate will finish its final level III this spring with another 47 graduates who now receive transfer credit into our full time turf diploma program. The full time Turf Management Diploma has maxed out once again at 32 students, oversubscribed again for its 11th year. With another full section on the waiting list, is the largest in the country, continuing to attract students to its compressed block system, and summer internship program. With some room still to grow in the applied degree, we are expecting another full section into 3rd year, with BASc degree students back on Campus in January 2025 for our Bachelor of Golf Course Management.

For more information regarding Turf research, past projects or future opportunities, check our website [Alberta Turfgrass Research Foundation](https://www.albertaturfgrassresearch.com). For program information in Olds College Turf Management Certificate, Diploma or Applied Science Degree in Golf Course management, visit: [Oldscollege.ca](https://www.oldscollege.ca), or contact Jason Pick, 403-556-8243

