

innovation
still
never stops:
2021

TRIPLE PLAY

□ *Editor's Note: BASF and Golf Course Industry are working together to tell the story of how three new products are coming to life for the golf market. This is the first part of a three-part series.*

A product launch is nothing new for Jeff Vannoy. But three in one year? “It’s no small feat,” he says. Vannoy’s job as a senior product manager at BASF involves overseeing the expanding golf course portfolio. Two years after the successful introduction of Maxtima® fungicide and Navicon® Intrinsic® brand fungicide into the golf market, the innovation engine keeps running at BASF. In short, this will be a busy year for Vannoy and the BASF team.

Busy represents an industry-wide theme. Steady demand on golf courses means superintendents are seeking innovative solutions to control disease, pests and weeds. Developing those solutions requires listening to the needs of the people responsible for producing pleasing playing conditions. That listening led to BASF developing Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide, a pair of DMI fungicides effectively and safely used to control myriad disease during unforgiving parts of the growing season.

“Golf course superintendents have always been interested and willing to invest in new technology to take care of their key course assets such as greens, fairways, tees, etc.,” Vannoy says. “They are also very discerning in asking the right questions from manufacturers and university researchers to clearly understand if the new product is truly innovative.

“In the case of Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide, the research was clearly unprecedented and the ability to use a DMI during hot, humid periods on cool-season turf is something totally new for the industry. One thing is for sure, golf course superintendents are never fooled by pseudo-innovations that simply copy what’s already readily available on the market.”

The trio of new products BASF plans to introduce this year includes an insecticide, herbicide and fungicide. Conceptualization for the products started four years ago. BASF has multiple teams of scientists and business professionals collaborating on the product launch - more than 200 BASF professionals are involved in the process, according to Vannoy. “There are a lot of hurdles to get over to get a new product concept approved and invested in,” Vannoy says. Development time varies depending on whether a product is an entirely new active ingredient or a new formulation for an existing active ingredient.

“The golf market is a huge focus for BASF and is seen as a critical business unit within North America,” Vannoy adds. “We are making plans and investments to have an increasingly broader portfolio as time moves on. We will always have best-in-class fungicides, but we want to be well-rounded, and a larger part of every golf course superintendent’s toolbox of pesticide needs.”

BASF will enter a new realm later this year when it launches its first insecticide into the golf market. Alucion™ 35 WG insecticide is a dual mode-of-action insecticide and is formulated to offer broad-spectrum control of surface-feeding insects.

“As we looked into developing a new

COURSEPOWER
DIAGNOSTIC

Something new on the screen, too

BASF isn't just launching three new products in 2021. The company also has a new digital platform designed to help superintendents. Let senior product manager Jeff Vannoy explain.

“BASF is in a very heavy investment phase into digital golf agronomy,” he says. “We just launched our new platform that is called the CoursePower Diagnostic. It’s an agronomic platform that provides superintendents the expertise of our sales and technical professionals in tailoring recommendations to the specific course. This will be ever-evolving and it’s going to change how we provide recommendations to customers.”

Visit betterturf.basf.us/course-power-diagnostic.html to learn more about CoursePower Diagnostic and complete your course profile.

product, it was clear that there were good options on the market for controlling grubs,” Vannoy says. “However, there are many other insects that a golf course faces in a given year. We have designed Alucion 35 WG insecticide to fit into some of these other areas of need.”

Ant control, for example, is one of those needs.

“A recent trend the past four to six years in golf has been the onslaught of nuisance ants on greens,” Vannoy says. “The issue is not damage. It’s rather the playability that can be affected by the mini ant mounds they build. BASF’s new Alucion™ 35 WG insecticide technology will address this in a powerful new way. That’s just one of many examples of how we come to work each day to help solve some of the superintendents’ problems.”

BASF is also launching Finale® XL T&O herbicide in 2021, expanding a weed control portfolio already consisting of staples such as Drive® XLR8 herbicide, Tower® herbicide and Pylex® herbicide.

And yes, a new fungicide is part of BASF’s 2021 plans. Encartis™ fungicide

will build heavily on Emerald® fungicide, a proven dollar spot control tool. In addition to Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide, Vannoy has also been involved with the launches of Lexicon® Intrinsic® brand fungicide and Xzemplar® fungicide in his 19 years with BASF. The exhilaration of giving customers new options to solve potential problems never subsides.

“The BASF golf team is a dedicated group of very experienced scientists and business professionals that know the golf industry front and back,” Vannoy says. “What’s neat is to see folks working together for a similar cause of helping to make the life of a golf course superintendent better in some way. Even though it’s a ton of work in launch year, it’s very rewarding to know that the customer you’re serving is going to benefit. There are multiple project teams within BASF that make a new launch happen. I work with some very smart and educated folks who enjoy what they do as much as I do.” ■

■ BASF

We create chemistry

Always read and follow label directions.

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