

Why Use Nature Safe on Fairways? Gabe Diaz-Saavedra, Regional Manager

That's the question Joe Bambino, Superintendent at Wynmoor Golf Community in Ft. Lauderdale, asked me during a sales call. Joe also wanted to know why he should continue to use Nature Safe instead of switching to a manure-based organic.

To answer Joe's questions, we decided to set up a side-by-side comparison of Nature Safe 13-0-0 with manure-based organic Perdue 4-2-3 on his sandiest fairways. Before the comparison, Joe did the math to determine comparable rates of N: 246 lbs. of NS 13-0-0 and 800 lbs. of Perdue 4-2-3.

Most soils in Florida are high in P, so the use of additional P is not going to provide any value and will not have any impact upon the results of the test since P is so slowly available to the plant. The K can be supplemented with SOP or K-Mag, so side-by-side comparisons can be done with validity.

Even though there wasn't an outstanding difference in product performance during the three month trial, there were some definite differences that Joe mentioned during our follow-up meeting. "Our membership noticed the manure's strong odor. I also had to put down four times more Perdue and it did not blend into the fairway grass as easily as the Nature Safe," said Joe. "The handling and efficiency differences of the two products are enough for me to continue using Nature Safe on my fairways."

In addition to cost and efficiency benefits, Nature Safe's fertility is readily available to the plant, improving stress tolerance and reducing disease pressures. The metals in manures can present fertility balance issues thus leaving plants susceptible to low stress tolerance and diseases.

If fairways are weak and need a boost, the use of Nature Safe will help stimulate microbial activity and keep the stress of winter from wreaking havoc on fairways.