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## **Alfalfa Green to Address Turf Grass Salinity**

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Alfalfa Green pellets are a versatile product, branching from traditional use in the feed market to world of lawn care and gardening. The horticultural and landscaping possibilities are endless as Alfalfa Green (AG) has proven itself as an efficient soil amendment and slow-release fertilizer while remaining environment and human-friendly. Many industries have seen the benefits of using AG in their soil care regimes including market gardens, remediation and reclamation, and turf grass care. AG soil amendment and slow-release fertilizer has been proven with both customer testimonials and with scientific research to improve common turfgrass problems.

AG is made of 100% dehydrated alfalfa forage and naturally contains over 30 micro- and macro nutrients, minerals, vitamins, a naturally-occurring plant hormone. Most importantly, a high fiber content. The addition of plant-based proteins kick-start the microbes necessary for nutrient cycling and plant growth, and as the microbes break down the pellets, partially decomposed fibres work into the soil as organic matter. This organic matter is essential to plant health by retaining soil moisture, buffering against extreme temperatures, and improving and preventing soil compaction.

During their breakdown process, the pellets absorb up to four times their weight in excess soil moisture and hang onto that moisture until the soil is dry enough to draw it out. Having these miniature water reserves helps both drought- and flood-proof soils by increasing both moisture retention and absorption while improving water movement throughout the soil profile.

When it comes to managing turf grass salinity, Alfalfa Green is a game-changer. As AG works to improve soil structure and soil characteristics such as compaction and salinity experience are improved, albeit indirectly. Nutrient availability is highly dependent on soil pH. It is crucial for plant growth to keep the soil at its optimum pH so that nutrients in the soil are in their plant-available chemical form and in the right amounts. Generally, the soil pH sweet spot is close to neutral, as this is where most nutrients are available in the correct balance for plant nutrition. Products with a neutral pH like Alfalfa Green buffer acidity or alkalinity and prevent the nutrient deficiencies and toxicities that start appearing if the pH gets too high or too low.

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Salinity, the compounding issue faced by golf courses around the world, is often a result of years of application of conventional fertilizers or Milorganite, or from dissolved salts in irrigation water. Factors such as poor drainage, which is often a result of low organic matter, compaction, or clay soils, make salinity accumulation patchy. As pooled water evaporates, the salts that had been dissolved in the water are left behind, creating a layer of salts on the soil surface. Alfalfa green addresses the physical factors that contribute to soil salinity, making it the perfect addition to turf grass care regimes.

Royal Regina Golf Course has measured their electronic conductivity (EC) at a level of 5 dS/mm. According to literature, anything over 4dS/mm is so saline that almost no plants will grow. Applications of Alfalfa Green will help lower this EC and get grass established in these areas by:

- 1) Add organic matter to the soils;
- 2) Neutral pH;
- 3) Over 20 micro- and macronutrients;
- 4) Fertilize without adding to the salt content; and
- 5) Mitigates the effects of excess sulfur by neutralizing pH and kick-starting the microbial nutrient cycling processes.

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