

Advancing the Turfgrass Industry in New Jersey and the World



Photo Rutgers Horticulture Farm II.



FUNDING TURF ADVANCEMENTS #7: **New Drainage Swale at Rutgers Hort. Farm II**

It is lovely when April showers bring May flowers, but this year's September rain caused a problematic overflow of water on the Rutgers Horticulture Farm II test plots. During a heavy storm this past autumn, the rainwater rose too high and started running onto some of the newly seeded turfgrass research plots. The implications of flooding go without saying.

Thanks to funding from the NJTA, the team at Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science hired Advanced Athletic Services of [The Viersma Companies](#) to reconstruct an existing drainage swale.



“The existing swale was not large enough to effectively move the water around the test plots as intended,” said Howard Viersma, who led the construction project.

Using an excavator to dig, a tractor with a dump wagon to move the soil, and a track skid steer for the grading, Howard and his team spent three days excavating a deeper and more consistent drainage swale to handle a larger volume of water.

“One consideration was maintenance,” said Howard. “We wanted to create a swale deep enough to solve the

problem at hand, but not too steep that it can't be maintained by standard mowing equipment."

After careful deliberation, they created a 400-foot long swale with a third of one percent slope. The steeper side slopes of the swale made it challenging to sod with big rolls, but the new drainage swale is now complete and Rutgers' newly seeded turfgrass test plots are out of flooding harm's way.

"This was a game saver!" said Rutgers' Extension Specialist Dr. James Murphy. "The swale reconstruction saved the 2018 NTEP tall fescue, which would have been washed out several times by rain storms this fall."



Family-owned and operated since 1965, The Viersma Companies initially provided various excavating services. Over the years, they came to specialize in renovations and maintenance of natural turf athletic fields. In addition to drainage installation and field construction, the Advanced Athletic Services branch of the company provides aeration, over-seeding, top-dressing, laser grading, and other turfgrass services.

FUNDING TURF ADVANCEMENTS is Brought to You By: **YOU & ALL Members of the NJTA**

The NJTA New Jersey Turfgrass Association exists solely to promote the turfgrass industry in the Garden State through education, professionalism, and leadership. Thanks to the support of members like you, the NJTA is able to subsidize some of the research needs of the Rutgers University Center for Turfgrass Science.

If you would like to support these efforts further, you are welcome to [Donate to the NJTA Foundation](#) anytime!



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT THE
NJ TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION.

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