January/February 2020



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#### <u>PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE</u>

#### Davíd Gray - Presídent STGCSA

Hello again everybody, I would like to start by saying Thank you to Brian Johnson with Sand Hill Farm for hosting the Pesticide CEU event in January and Wade Warms for hosting the Chili cook-off meeting at Cypress Lakes GC. All of the Chili earned 1st place in my book, even though Keith Watson took home the 1st place trophy! Congratulations Keith! Also, a big thanks to anyone that helped sponsor/donate to those events or helped the STGCSA in any form.

Wade Warms, Great accomplishment on winning the "Sonny Dubose Award", job well done! Well deserved!

We have a unique and exciting form of education planned for the March 2nd meeting and I am very excited that we are able to offer this to our STGCSA members. I am looking forward to seeing everybody at Timber Creek for this educational event. In addition, the tradition will continue on April 14th with our annual Scholarship tournament at High Meadow Ranch please come out and support the association and the members. Earnings go to members families furthering their education! Donations are welcome anytime as always for this great Auction/Golf Event! Please contact Carrie if you have something to donate. Hope to see everybody out there as well!

Now, looking back in early December when I wrote the presidents message for the Tee To Green, I wanted to talk about how I feel about being a golf course superintendent and the way I see my course/work place throughout the year. Well, here I sit in late February, "in the office again". Looking out the office window at an already soaked golf course, it's raining, and we're supposed to have temperatures in the mid 30's for the next two nights. I find this strange because that's exactly how it was when I was in the office writing for the last newsletter back in early December. It's amazing how this happens, it was just 80 degrees 2 days ago and the trees are already budding with small leaves. I constantly have to remind myself that we're in Huntsville and we are on average 10 degrees cooler than the Houston area. All that aside, we are all getting ready to apply or have already applied the pre-emergent for the spring to catch that early crabgrass and goose grass that can pop on those days when the soil temps got warm enough! This is always that time of year where you never know what to expect when it comes to the weather. We all want to get the pre-emerge apps down at the right time because it helps us sleep at night, knowing we got it down before we hit those 80 degree days helps us sleep a little better because we're not waking up so many times thinking about the course. It's just such a pain to have to post spray some weeds when all we had to do is apply the pre-emerge just a week or two earlier. I remember feeling this way back in August and September also getting ready for fall pre-emerge apps., just pondering how my course at times has been known to produce a really nice crop of annual bluegrass. This year has been ok, but the somewhat mild winter and damp spring are making it hard to keep clean. It's always a challenge in the late summer finding the right combination of products that will keep the course and greens free of poa throughout the cold winter/early spring months. I have tried something new on the greens this year and it seems to have worked out good so far. The next Tee To Green may have an interesting twist however if something goes horribly wrong. Perhaps a new author for the presidents message. Lol. Moving on, I personally feel that in this Industry there is always the potential to experience something new, no matter who you are a Superintendent or Affiliate, we all have the potential! I did have the opportunity to experience something new this past December. This "new experience" that really took us by surprise, by the way, was having hogs hit the course night after night. This happened about mid-December and all through the Christmas holidays. We practically spent every day repairing damage from the hogs. It's crazy how much they can tear up. I'm not sure why they quit digging honestly. It would have to be that they lost interest or were afraid of dying from lead poisoning, who honestly knows! There was no damage on the greens, which was nice. Besides that, everything is progressing like normal here, this time of year is a good opportunity for my small crew to work on bunker drains, lower a few collar dams, find and un-clog some slow drains in various areas that we could not get to back in the summer and fall. We are slowly working on all those things, of course that is when we are not getting a quick cut on the tees or fairways because we had a two day stretch where it was dry enough to take the mower's out. All while taking part in a turf war with the members cart traffic because it just went 90-degree rule for those two days as well. No matter how sarcastic we can be at times, I say all of this with a smile on my face. Most of us know our course members and understand what we can and can't get away with. It's always fun this time of year explaining what's going on to the members and what the new season holds for the course. I am looking forward to the warmer weather and the chance to keep the course looking and playing great this year.

Always remember to take care of the things you can control, and manage to the best of your abilities the things that are out of your control!

David Gray





### Welcome New/Returning Members!!!!

Kyle Cade - Superintendent @ Pearland Golf Club Sam Cocke - Sales Manager @ Double Oak Erosion Joe Mattingly - President @ Double Oak Erosion Ben Holmes - Senior Assistant Superintendent @ Houston Country Club Danny McConnell - Territory Sales Representative @ Brookside Rodolfo "Fito" Velasquez - Territory Sales Representative @ Brookside Josh Smith - Assistant Superintendent @ The Club at Carlton Woods Bob Wiesner - Assistant Superintendent @ The Club at Carlton Woods Kevin Bednarik - Assistant Superintendent @ The Club at Carlton Woods Tyler Carmichael - Assistant Superintendent @ Grand Pines Golf Club **Richard Mendez - Assistant Superintendent @ Lochinvar Golf Club** Jordan Holmes - Assistant Superintendent @ Lochinvar Golf Club Tom Werner - Superintendent @ Elkins Lake Donnie Click - Click's Golf Tires Andi Lehmann Young - Managing Member @ Turf Specialties Texas Max Lehmann - Operations @ Turf Specialties Texas **Corby White - Product Manager @ Helena** 

We welcome you to the Association!!!!

PLEASE BE SURE TO PAY YOUR 2020 MEMBER DUES BY MARCH 15, 2020 TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STGCSA MEMBER DIRECTORY SCHEDULED TO BE MAILED OUT AT THE END OF MARCH!

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# Member Spotlight

#### Dennis Wagner - Western Regional Golf Manager for Hunter Golf

Dennis Wagner was just recently promoted to the position of Western Regional Golf Manager for Hunter Golf. This new position oversees the sales of the western 2/3 of the US. Previously Dennis served in the capacity of Business Development Manager for the Central US for Hunter Golf for the last 5 years. Before that, Dennis worked for 15 years at Rain Bird Golf, in the capacity of Golf Manager, National Accounts Manager and finally as Central US Specification Manager, as well as Hunter and Rain Bird distributors over his 32+ years in the Golf Course Irrigation Industry. Dennis has been in irrigation since 1982 where he started out as a residential/commercial contractor. Dennis has been a member of the South Texas GCSA since 1987, except for the 9 years that he fled Texas and lived in Florida, all the while still working in the golf course irrigation industry.



Dennis served 14 years on the GCBAA (Golf Course Builders Association of America) Board of Directors. Served as Vice President for the last 6 years of his tenure. Also served on the Board of Directors of the GCBAA Foundation. He is still active in the Association, continuing with his assignment as the Auctioneer for the Foundation's "Stick for Kids" charity auction at the annual summer GCBAA convention. Dennis was bestowed the honor of being awarded the 2018 GCBAA Perry Dye award. He is only the 6th person in 40-year history to receive this distinguished award.

Dennis grew up in Schulenburg TX and graduated from Bishop Forest High School in 1974. He received his BS degree in Mathematics, with minor in Physics from Sam Houston State University. Dennis's plans were to be a mechanical engineer, heading into college. Dennis entered the 3/2 program, a combined study program between SHSU and Texas A&M. But somehow the disc jockeying gig bit Dennis at Sam (ever since, he has never met a microphone he didn't like) during his stint at SHSU and changed his dream of designing into selling golf course irrigation.

Dennis enjoys living on the beach, on the West End of Galveston Island, along with his wife Sherri of 37 years and their newest addition to the family, "Whiskey", a 1 year old (still a puppy) German Shorthair Pointer, who loves to chase the seagulls and pelicans on the beach. If I could only teach him to fish in the surf!!

# Member News

### Do you have any news to share such as:

A Job Promotion?

Hosting a Major Tournament?

Moving Jobs?

**Getting Married?** 

**Birth Announcements?** 

Etc.?

Please email Carrie Cole at <a href="stgcsa@stgcsa.org">stgcsa@stgcsa.org</a> so we can share the latest news and get to know our fellow members!

# WANTED

We're looking to add an Assistant Superintendent seat to our Board of Directors in 2021!

If you are a Superintendent and would like to nominate your assistant for this new seat, please email Carrie Cole at <u>stgcsa@stgcsa.org</u>

### **Meeting & Education** March 2, 2020 Host: Andy Coz TIMBER CREEK Speaker: Donna Forgy, President at ProSkills, Inc. Topic: Mental Health & Stress Management in the Workplace Thank you to our Meeting Sponsor: **Register Here** COMMITTED. SIMDIO CONSULTATIVE. TURF & HORTICULTURE CONNECTED. A RELATIONSHIP THAT MATTERS Discover more at www.simplotpartners.com **Rick Partain** Travis Klosterboer Scott Dotson **Jay Blodgett** scott.dotson@simplot.com rick.partain@simplot.com travis.klosterboer@simplot.com jay.blodgett@simplot.com cell: (346) 242-5337 cell: (281) 415-2613 cell: (713) 203-9047 cell: (281) 726-3485

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# 2020 South Texas GCSA, Inc. Scholarship Application

The 2020 Scholarship Awards Ceremony is scheduled for August 8, 2020 (Location TBA)

#### The application deadline is May 1, 2020 with transcripts due July 1, 2020

Send all documents by email or mail. Transcripts need to be mailed directly to:

South Texas, GCSA, Inc. PO Box 2443 Cypress, TX 77410-2443 <u>stgcsa@stgcsa.org</u>

### Click Here for the 2020 STGCSA Scholarship Application



### We want your *Poa.*

Do you have a population of annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) with known or suspected herbicide resistance? We want to come collect it.

#### What we are looking for:

- A golf course, athletic field, sod farm, or professional landscape operator with a Poa problem
- Southern Texas sites are a PLUS
- A minimum of 25 Poa plants for us to collect
- Your name, contact information, site name, and willingness to let us take your weeds and try to kill them

#### What do you have to do?

- Email Dr. Becky Grubbs bgrubbs@tamu.edu
- Provide some background information on your site
- Schedule a time that we can come and take your weeds (Nov Mar)





# SAVE THE DATE!

### **Annual Scholarship Tournament**

High Meadow Ranch Golf Club April 14, 2020 Host: Cody Spivey

### **Registration coming soon!**



We are now accepting Auction Items & Sponsorships!

Please email <u>stgcsa@stgcsa.org</u> with your auction donations & sponsorships!

Thank you for your support!

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# 75th U.S. Women's Open Championship Champions Golf Club Houston, Texas June 4-7, 2020



Click the button below to volunteer or contact Brady Forshey at <u>bforshey@championsgolfclub.com</u> for more information. Thank you for your consideration!

### Volunteer Here

### Do you have an article that you'd like to submit?

If so, please submit your article for any newsletter with the topic of your choice to Carrie Cole at <a href="mailto:stgcsa@stgcsa.org">stgcsa@stgcsa.org</a>. Articles must be received one week before the next newsletter is scheduled to go out to be included in that Tee To Green. All topics are welcomed!

#### Water Quality And Pesticide Interactions

John Daniels, USGA Agronomist, Central Region

Insects, diseases and weeds, oh my! Keeping these pests at bay on a golf course is a constant challenge, but good results are increasingly achievable with the help of modern pesticides. Still, sometimes pesticides do not deliver the results one might expect. Perhaps the treatment timing was off, or the rate applied was too low? Maybe the product selected is not an effective control option, or a large percentage of the pest population has developed resistance? These issues are often the first things that come to mind when a product comes up short. What is often overlooked, however, is the role that water quality plays.

It should come as no surprise that water quality plays a key role in the effectiveness of an application. After all, the vast majority of a given spray mixture is comprised of water – often more than 95 percent. Despite being such a huge percentage of what is applied to the turf, the water itself often receives little thought when planning an application. Measuring a specific volume during the mixing process to achieve a desired dilution is typically the only attention water gets.

Superintendents could learn a thing or two from farmers, who routinely adjust the water carrier before adding a pesticide to the tank. This is a simple, low-cost step that can increase the effectiveness of certain pesticides. So, what water issues are farmers trying to overcome and how do they make their water better?

The two main attributes to consider when evaluating water quality that can negatively affect pesticide performance are pH and hardness.



#### Water pH

Everyone should remember from science class that pH ranges from 0 to 14. A pH of 7 is considered neutral, pH less than 7 is acidic, and a pH greater than 7 is alkaline.

Certain pesticides are sensitive to pH and will begin to break down when they react with water through a process known as hydrolysis (hydro-, meaning "water", and lysis, meaning "to unbind"). Basically, the pesticide's active ingredient is broken into smaller molecules and rendered useless. Hydrolysis can occur from the moment a product is added to the spray solution and once a pesticide molecule is broken, it will no longer be effective.

Organophosphorus and carbamate insecticides have been shown to be sensitive to alkaline hydrolysis (Fukuto, 1990). Therefore, if you are going to be using a popular product like carbaryl to control chinch bugs, you will want to ensure that your water pH is below 8. This recommendation is stated within the carbaryl label.

It's not just insecticides that are at risk for hydrolysis, herbicides like metsulfuron-methyl are also vulnerable. However, unlike the carbaryl example, researchers found that a moderately alkaline pH between 8.2 and 9.4 is not as problematic as an acidic pH of 5.2 to 6.2 for metsulfuron-methyl (Sarmah, 2000). Thus, hydrolysis can occur in basic and acidic solutions, so it is important to understand the unique label instructions for a given product regarding water quality.

Water carrier pH can also reduce the efficacy of commonly used herbicides like 2,4-D, dicamba, and glyphosate, which are weak acids. When such herbicides are mixed in an alkaline water they can become negatively charged and not readily absorbed past the leaf cuticle and cell membrane (Chahal, 2012). Less active ingredient entering the plant reduces the likelihood of delivering a lethal dose and may ultimately lead to poor weed control.

Fungicides are less impacted by water pH than insecticides and herbicides. The only two fungicides that have been reported to be less effective at certain pH ranges are captan and thiophanate-methyl. Captan use in turfgrass systems is quite limited and most superintendents aren't even familiar with this chemistry. Thiophanate-methyl, on the other hand, has been used in the turf industry for numerous years and is commonly applied for summer patch control.

Savvy superintendents will note that thiophanate-methyl labels have some language about avoiding water carriers with alkaline pH. However, the amount of published data supporting this recommendation is quite limited and based on a single-year study (Fidanza, 2009). Researchers from Purdue University found that pH of spray carrier water had no effect on the efficacy of thiophanate-methyl and metconazole against dollar spot on creeping bentgrass (Stacy, 2020). They did observe a slight reduction in efficacy of iprodione at a pH of 9, but only after it was left in the solution for a period of 24 hours prior to application. (continued on next page)

This is an important principle to keep in mind when mixing pesticides. The longer a product is left in solution, the more vulnerable it will be to pH issues like hydrolysis. Every effort should be made to finish an application within a few hours of mixing a tank. Do not store tank mixes of products overnight as they will not work as well. Following this best practice alone could help improve the efficacy of your applications.

The use of pH adjusters can also help, though it is a good idea to consult the pesticide label before adding one of these products to

the tank as some pesticides are already formulated to act as a pH buffer. If that is the case, you might not need to add anything at all to address water pH concerns. Contact the pesticide manufacturer should you have any questions as to whether the addition of an adjuvant would be beneficial.

Another way to avoid pH-related water issues is using a different product that is less affected by pH. For example, switching from 2,4-D amine to a 2,4-D ester formulation can improve performance in highpH water.



#### Water Hardness

Similar to pH, water hardness can influence the way pesticides perform. Hard water – caused by the presence of dissolved cations such as calcium, magnesium and iron – affects about 85 percent of the country and has been shown to reduce the efficacy of glyphosate and other weak-acid herbicides. The positively charged cations in hard water bind with the negatively charged herbicide molecules, resulting in less-effective weed control.

Fortunately, there is a simple, inexpensive remedy. When ammonium sulfate is added to hard water, it breaks down into ammonium

and sulfate. The negatively charged sulfate binds to the positively charged cations in hard water. Conditioning hard water with ammonium sulfate in a sprayer before adding glyphosate, glufosinate, or other weak-acid herbicides can improve uptake and efficacy.

A water quality test will help determine whether you could benefit from conditioning the water and exactly how much ammonium sulfate is needed. The components within a water test we want to focus on are sodium (Na+), potassium (K+), calcium (Ca2+), magnesium (Mg2+) and iron (Fe2+). The amount of ammonium sulfate to add to the tank in pounds per 100 gallons = (0.005 x ppm Na+) + (0.002 x ppm K+) + (0.009 x ppm Ca2+) + (0.014 x ppm Mg2+) + (0.042 x ppm Fe2+).



Water with a hardness of 200 parts per million (ppm) or more should be treated with ammonium sulfate, unless stated otherwise within the pesticide label. As a general rule of thumb, one 51-pound bag of ammonium sulfate per 300 gallons of water is enough to combat issues with hard water. This is a tried-and-true method that has served farmers well for a number of years.

#### **Testing Your Water**

Water quality testing to determine the most appropriate conditioning steps is a great way to get the most out of your pesticides. Submitting a water sample to your local university extension testing laboratory for analysis is advised. The cost is relatively inexpensive (\$35-\$55), especially when you compare it to the average cost of a pesticide application. There are also a number of private laboratories that provide water quality testing for the agricultural industry.

Keep in mind that water properties can fluctuate in some areas throughout the year so testing two or three times over the course of the first year might be useful. Once a detailed test is completed, purchase a handheld pH meter if you don't have one already. This is a great way to double-check the spray tank water immediately prior to mixing a pesticide. You should be able to pick up a unit for \$125 or less. Avoid using the paper test strips as they are less accurate and less user-friendly.

Water hardness is not as easy to measure in the field and requires submitting a sample to a laboratory. Sampling one time each year should be sufficient once you have determined a baseline. (continued on next page)

If you are looking for more information on identifying or solving water quality problems, please contact your regional USGA agronomist. They can help interpret test results and provide guidance on ways to improve your pesticide performance.

John Daniels is an agronomist in the Central Region.

#### Sources

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Stacy, T., and R. Latin. 2020. The influence of water pH on efficacy of fungicides for turf disease control. Applied Turfgrass Sci.

#### **Photos and Captions**

Label review.jpg - Superintendents need to know any specific water pH recommendations for pesticides they plan to use. Some products might call for the addition of a buffering agent.

Pesticide application.jpg - Research shows that water quality can affect the performance of certain pesticides. Understanding water characteristics and product sensitivities can improve spray program results.

Tank mixing.jpg - Adding ammonium sulfate to the spray solution can improve herbicide performance for those dealing with hard water.







### Is your Spouse a School Teacher?

#### **Introduction to First Green**

Founded in 1997, First Green is the only STEM education and environmental outreach program in the United States and Canada that uses golf courses as learning labs.

First Green, a Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) program, pairs golf courses with local schools for unique Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) learning opportunities. Golf Course Superintendents coordinate a 90 minute to two (2) hour field trip.

Students rotate through learning stations covering topics such as soil and plant science, golf course ecology, testing water quality, various math calculations using actual problems golf course superintendents need to solve on a daily basis, or going on nature hikes.

There are 11 complete lesson plans available on <u>www.thefirstgreen.org</u>. However, the potential of First Green learning stations is limited only by what the host superintendent and teacher decide to offer based on the nature of the golf course and interests of the students.



First Green field trips benefits young people by helping

them apply their classroom knowledge in an outdoor setting. By understanding how STEM concepts



can have real-world applications students find new inspiration in their schoolwork and in the possibility of a career in a STEM field or golf. An added benefit to this program is that many of the kids attending these field trips have never been on a golf course. We are introducing a whole new audience to this great game and the valuable green space golf courses offer in their communities.

There are only three (3) requirements in order to host a field trip:

-You must be a GCSAA member!

-Students. You need students to participate in the field trip. You can work with your local public, private or virtual schools. Hosts have also worked with First Tee chapters, their Boy Scout Troop and Junior Golf kids.

-STEM Activities. First Green is STEM based. You must be willing to facilitate the learning labs.

If hosting students for two hours makes you nervous – don't worry! We are here to make this as easy as possible. We have prepared the lessons, broken down what you'll need and included step-by-step checklists to help you along the way.

Let's get started! Reach out to me: Johnny Walker, GCSAA South Central Field Representative, 713-557-0279.

### **GCSAATV**

### **Golf Channel**



The South Texas GCSA is once again offering the:

#### 2020 STGCSA Marian Takushi Memorial GIS Scholarship

The STGCSA is sending two deserving Superintendent Members to the January 30 -February 4, 2021 Golf Industry Show in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The scholarship will cover the cost of registration, round trip airfare between Houston and Las Vegas, 4 nights hotel stay, a 50/day stipend, and registration for one  $\frac{1}{2}$ -day seminar.

The scholarship is intended to assist STGCSA Superintendent Members whose club does not normally pay for them to attend the conference, though all are welcome to apply.

# Congratulations to Wade Warms & Kevin Lyles for receiving the 2019 Scholarship!

We hope everyone takes advantage of this great opportunity and applies!





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### Some Talk...Others Try... We Deliver!



## Lebanon Turf Announces Emerald Isle Sweepstake with Grand Prize of \$5,000 GCSAA Chapter Donation

**LEBANON, Penn.** (February 24, 2020) - LebanonTurf, an industry-leading provider of innovative and highperformance plant nutrition for the golf and landscaping industries, is launching a new campaign in 2020 highlighting its Emerald Isle Solutions True Foliar Technology. Emerald Isle Solutions use fulvic acid and sea plant extract to deliver nutrients directly to the plant through foliar absorption. The program will focus on the value of the product as well as the commitment LebanonTurf makes to customers in the professional turf industry.

As a part of the program, LebanonTurf announced a new, permanent lower price point for Emerald Isle Solutions. This elevates the value of the product, and gives superintendents and turf managers more freedom in managing their budgets. Additionally, to show an increased commitment to customers and maintenance crews in the turf industry, LebanonTurf is giving away a \$500 Amazon gift card each month, plus a \$5,000 grand prize donation to the winner's local GCSAA chapter.

In addition to the lower price point, LebanonTurf has expanded the True Performance rebate program in 2020. Now, it is no longer a product bundle, and customers can get the rebate from Emerald Isle Solutions without having to buy the LebanonTurf Country Club MD product. The available rebates include:

10% rebate on \$8,000 of Emerald Isle Solutions5% rebate on \$4,000 of Emerald Isle Solutions

"Supporting the local GCSAA Chapters and their members has always been a priority for LebanonTurf," said Chris Gray, Golf Market Manager for LebanonTurf. "Emerald Isle Solutions is an industry proven liquid product line for over 30 years and we're incredibly proud having it help support all the important chapter activities."

For more information on the campaign, contest or the Emerald Isle Solutions product, visit the brand new product landing page: <u>www.lebanonturf.com/emerald-isle</u>.

#### About LebanonTurf

LebanonTurf, a division of privately held Lebanon Seaboard, is the only company serving the landscape and golf markets that offers both microbiological components and advanced controlled-release fertilizers delivered as part of an integrated systems approach to turf and plant care needs. For more information, please visit www.lebanonturf.com or call 800-233-0628.

#### Media Contact:

Christopher Gray Golf Market Manager LebanonTurf 800-532-0090 x106

#### January/February 2020

#### Tee To Green

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### **Jack Hargrove Construction Company**

**Jack Hargrove** Owner 936-448-2490 hargroveconstruction@aol.com



#### **REPAIRS AND RESTORATION**







### Interested in representing South Texas GCSA, Inc. at National Golf Day on May 6, 2020 in Washington, D.C.?

If so, please let Carrie Cole or any Board Member know. Registration is open through March 13.



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Thank you to our 2020 Sponsors! We sincerely appreciate you supporting our Association!

### CLICK HERE FOR 2020 SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES



### Looking to Buy or Sell used equipment?

Email Carrie Cole at <u>stgcsa@stgcsa.org</u> and include a picture, short description, asking price, & your contact information. Please let us know once it is sold!

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January/February 2020

