



PRESS RELEASE

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ESA is the voice of the European seed industry, representing those active in research, breeding, production and marketing of seeds of agricultural and ornamental plant species. It represents 40 national seed associations (and with that more than 1000 seed businesses in the EU) and more than 60 direct company members.

ESA's mission is to work for fair and proportionate regulation of the European seed industry, freedom of choice for customers in supplying seeds as a result of innovative, diverse technologies and production methods and for effective protection of intellectual property rights relating to plants and seed.

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Going green: ESA supports natural turf for football, sports and playing surfaces

In its recently published report entitled “Natural Turf: Why it remains the natural choice for football, sports and playing surfaces”, the European Seed Association (ESA) targets key decision makers at the municipality level who are responsible for sport facilities. The aim is to inform them about all aspects of both natural and artificial turf - and to encourage them to “go green” and opt for the natural choice.

According to ESA's report, investing in natural grass is the smart option for everybody involved: It protects the environment, is safer and healthier for the players and cheaper for local sports clubs.

Three good reasons to rely on natural turf!

Being by far the most sustainable, environmentally-and carbon-friendly option, natural turf releases less greenhouse gases and thus contributes in cutting the carbon footprint. Playing on natural grass also reduces the players' stress levels and even heart rate. Various studies have shown that the smells, sensations and experiences of being on a natural grass bring a number of health and wellbeing benefits. Last but not least, the report argues, backed up by figures, that natural turf also saves local sports clubs a significant amount of money. Due to considerable costs for initial investment, maintenance and waste management, artificial surfaces are often far higher per playing hour than natural ones.

Additionally, these days natural turf grounds are no longer subject to the formerly associated weather and performance risks, thanks to on-going endeavours of plant breeders: Innovative new grass species today are much more resistant to wear, tolerant to drought and less susceptible to diseases.

ESA's Technical Director, Bert Scholte, states that in many cases local decision makers simply do not have an overview of the different options when deciding on the renewal or construction of sport pitches including the related costs. The revised ESA report will enable them to take the right decision for their local needs.

In ESA's new background publication “Natural Turf: Why it remains the natural choice for football, sports and playing surfaces” (accessible via www.euroseeds.org) the facts, benefits and numbers have been updated and are presented in much greater detail.