

The Grass isn't Always Greener on the Sod Side

Caroline Choiniere
Southern New Hampshire University



Highlights

Predatory insects and biological controls may allow for decrease of chemical treatments of sod crops.

A study must be conducted to determine the role of biological controls in the quality and production of turfgrass sod.

Introduction

Sod, Turfgrass or Natural Grass Sod are a grass(es) that are grown in cropland and harvested between 4-14 months later for use as soil cover, carbon sequestration, soil erosion mitigation, recreational use, and in construction (1).

Sod is a farmed grass crop, the uses range from

- Agricultural
- Ornamental
- Soil erosion control
- Watershed mitigation and pollution control (2)

Part of 1.1-billion-dollar industry responsible for the recreational structure of sports, community gathering places, and watershed and soil erosion support(3).

USDA-APHIS are working to establish and grow the Turfgrass Sod industry

- Natural Grass Sod, Promotion and Research Order (4)
- Turfgrass Growers International (4)
- 1996 Farm Act (5)



Fig 1.



Fig 2.

Fig 3.

Point of Sod-Turfgrass

Pesticide and Herbicide Use – Biological controls and predatory insects may lessen the use of chemical controls to manage pests.

Biological Controls – using BMP and biological controls to lessen the use of herbicides and pesticides may benefit the production and quality of turfgrass sod. (7)

Sustainability – native grasses being combined with turfgrasses may benefit land management sustainability (6)

Social and Economic Impacts on Policy - Sustainable farming and environmental sustainability rely on communication between policy makers, farms, crop producers and conservationists work to expand the turfgrass sod industry (7)

- Open field burning in Oregon is reduced as public safety and air pollution concerns are raised.
- Open field burning previously decreased pest presence and lowered use of chemical controls.

Figure 4.
Fine Fescue seed production in the US



Proposal

Predatory Insects and biological controls may allow for decrease of pesticide and herbicide treatments of sod turfgrass crops.

- There is a lack of research in implementation of predatory insects to manage pest populations in turfgrass sod farming.

A study must be conducted to determine the role of biological controls in the quality and production of turfgrass sod as the USDA-APHIS Natural Grass Sod Turfgrass Promotion is put into regulation to expand the industry and advertise sod farming.

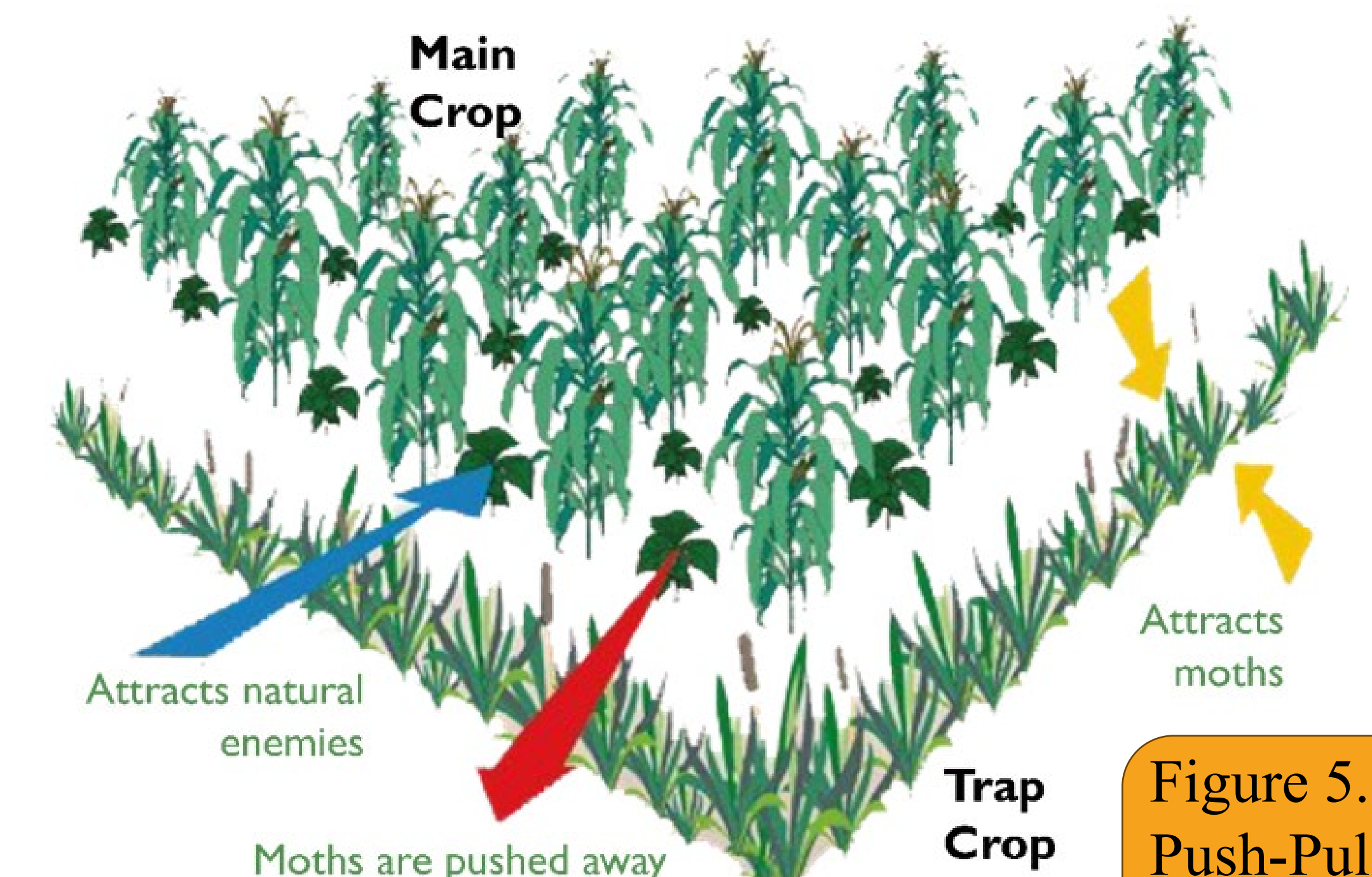


Figure 5.
Push-Pull Crop System



Figure 6.
Common Fall Armyworm caterpillar.

References

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Figures