

GREEN TEAM FIELD TRIP TO SODCO TURF FARM



A group of about 15 toured the beautiful Sodco turf farm in Slocum on Thursday June 2. The trip was a follow-up to the Green Team video discussion based on **KISS THE GROUND**, which emphasized the link between climate change and modern innovative agricultural methods. We saw how soil is made healthy with a minimum of water, insecticides and fertilizers through the use of alternating cover crops, no-till techniques, and other methods. We also saw how the farm uses and develops new varieties of improved grass seeds. One on-going experiment that caught lots of attention is an attempt to develop a new wildflower-grass turf that includes more than 20 varieties of flowering plants (see above). Besides its beauty, it is useful in erosion control and other applications.

The trip was led by Linda Tucker and farm manager John Edison. Linda provided a historical perspective of how and when the land was acquired by her father and mother; in the early days, her father flew his private plane from a landing strip on the farm to further his business connections with vendors along the eastern seaboard, first as a potato farmer, then with turf. John gave us straight forward examples of turf practices that are ecologically sound as well as economically advantageous. The trip was informative and fun, and we learned much about the science of turf farming in addition to the intricacies of the business aspects. Thanks to both of our hosts.

Submitted by Don Hermes, co-chair of Green Team