

EQUIPMENT

Lawn tractors: how to get most for your money

When a lawn care businessman goes on the market for a tractor, he finds that the units being offered today all look pretty much alike, even when they are several hundred dollars apart in price.

Lawn tractors can offer a little or a lot in the way of features, quality, operator comfort and dependability. Engineers from Massey-Ferguson Inc., Des Moines, Iowa have compiled a list of things to consider when it is time for you to buy your next lawn tractor.

There's more to the exterior than good looks. What lies beneath that crisp new coat of paint? Is the body made of steel? Or is it fiber glass? Or synthetic material? Does the hood adequately protect the engine and its components? Is there a tangle of levers, pedals and hand controls. Is the tractor designed to suit the needs of the human body?

Begin at the front. Some brands offer a fully enclosed engine. Unfortunately, this design may cause overheating which can curb engine performance and may even shorten engine life. Some brands may offer a fully exposed engine that lets plenty of air in ... and

plenty of noise out. And some manufacturers offer a semi-enclosed hood.

Check engine mounts. Under the hood, check to see how the engine is attached to the tractor frame. Is it metal-to-metal? Or is the engine mounted on vibration dampeners?

Check the muffler? Examine the entire exhaust system. Which way does it direct hot exhaust fumes?

Does the tractor have headlights? Or are they optional? You may need them for nighttime jobs like hauling and snow removal.

Check the steering. Does the steering shaft consist of a bent rod that passes through a slot in

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FINANCE

ChemLawn sales top \$48 million; 18 new branch offices to open

Sales of ChemLawn Corp., Columbus, Ohio were \$48.9 million in the fiscal year ended Oct. 29, 1977, company president Jack Van Fossen told 100 shareholders at the company's annual meeting in Dayton, Ohio recently.

The 1977 figures compare with sales of \$36.3 million for the same period ending in 1976. The growth is over \$12 million, or about 33 percent over the 1976 figures.

It was appropriate the meeting was held in Dayton, because it is one of the first cities where Chemlawn was marketed, and there are still many shareholders there. Stock was sold back in 1970 almost on a door-to-door basis to Chemlawn customers at \$5 per share, wrote *Dayton Daily News* business editor James C. Bohman in a recent issue.

Thanks to two stock splits, one original ChemLawn share is now worth 15 shares.

Not surprisingly, Bohman wrote, many original ChemLawn shareholders have the giddy feeling they own something very nice. The only hitch is there is no public trading in the stock, so none of the 1,100 holders of the 2,275,202 outstanding shares is quite sure what a share of stock is worth.

In response to a questioning shareholder, Van Fossen said he was unsure of its market value. He said he has heard talk of it selling for from \$9.50 to \$15.50 per share. But he stressed that he does not know if that is true.

"We feel an obligation to create a public market to gain

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LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Serving lawn maintenance and chemical lawn care professionals.

APRIL 1978 • VOL. 2, NO. 4 • A Harvest Publication

Dr. William H. Daniel, turf professor at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., where the conference was scheduled March 13-15, said that the governor's office and the Indiana Public Service Commission informed him of the decision in early March.

The energy cutbacks did not affect the state high school basketball playoff schedule. Over 700 were to attend the conference. It was not rescheduled, Dr. Daniel said.

BUSINESS

Winter rains thump California lawn care and landscape industry

Two months of rain have created heavy work backlogs for contractors, and massive unemployment problems for labor unions serving the landscape and irrigation industries in California, according to Morton W. Hermann, president of the California Landscape and Irrigation Council.

"Although the economy of the industry is booming, with more work than many businesses can handle, the rains have forced postponement of almost all jobs during the 10 weeks of heavy rains," Hermann told *LAWN CARE INDUSTRY*.

Burton S. Sperber, president of Valley Crest Landscape, Inc., the state's largest landscape firm, said that the rains have put his company 10 to 12 weeks behind schedule on their work backlog.

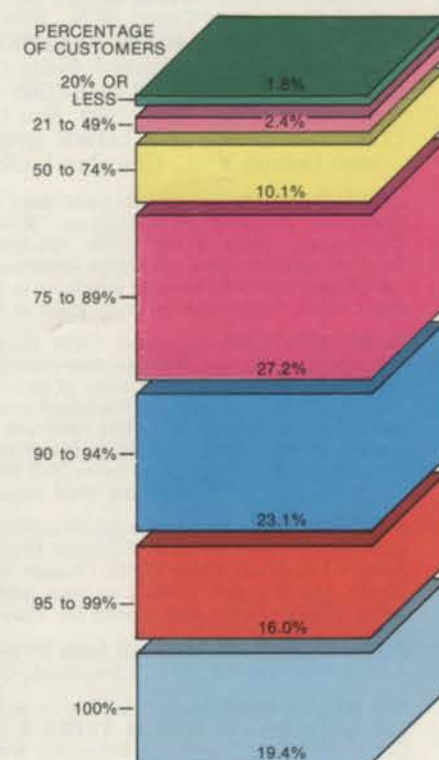
Valley Crest, like many other commercial/industrial landscaping firms, operates with a six to eight month work backlog. It currently has more than a 100 projects which have been delayed, postponed or tied up because of rains.

Smaller landscaping companies and many lawn maintenance operations have been similarly affected.

"Our biggest problem during January and February was meet-

ing our overhead expenses, and trying to keep our key people on the payroll until we can begin working again," said the owner of a small landscaping firm. "At least our key people are getting paid."

What percentage of customers did you retain from last year?



CONFERENCES

Coal strike cancels Midwest Turf meeting

The annual Midwest Turf Conference, with its full complement of 10 lawn care speakers on the three-day program, was cancelled last month due to energy cutbacks brought on by the now-settled coal strike.

QUICK STARTS

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For a complete market study of the lawn care industry in Detroit, see *MARKETPLACE*, page 10. This is part of a continuing series of in-depth looks at regions of the country where the lawn care business thrives. The study includes a profile of the city, potential lawn care customers, lawn care companies that operate there and how they go about getting and keeping customers.

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liquidity," Van Fossen told shareholders. He said they hope to have public trading within five years. He said he is seeking Securities and Exchange Commission approval to publish a list of shareholders who want to buy or sell their stock, which would be for distribution to present stockholders, the company told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY. "We hope to have that very quickly," he said.

Van Fossen told a stockholder he thought it inappropriate to speculate whether a market will be created to possibly dispose of the ChemLawn shares held by the estate of the company's founder, Richard L. Duke, who died in August (see LAWN CARE INDUSTRY, September/October, page 1).

Even though sales were up, he said that net income per share dropped to \$1.02 from \$1.14 the previous year due to start-up costs on new ventures: Commercial/Industrial Services; Chem-Scape, a horticultural and tree and shrubbery care service; and Poseidon, underground irrigation systems.

Current assets of the company total \$18.7 million, compared to \$13.9 million a year earlier. The company paid a dividend of 20 cents per share in 1977 and 12 cents in fiscal 1976.

ChemLawn has branches or franchises in 28 states, and a branch in Canada. Van Fossen said the company this year will open eight new branches in existing markets and 10 new marketing areas. Twenty-six new branches were added in last year and eight new markets were opened.

RESEARCH

Poa annua bulletin is now available

A new bulletin, *Annual Bluegrass — Description, Adaptation, Culture and Control*, written and edited by four top turf specialists, is now available.

The bulletin was prepared by Dr. James B. Beard, professor at Texas A & M University, who edited the volume; Dr. Paul E. Rieke, professor at Michigan State University; Dr. Alfred J. Turgeon, associate professor at the University of Illinois; and Dr. Joseph M. Vargas, associate professor at Michigan State University.

For information on obtaining the bulletin, contact: Dr. Paul E. Rieke, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, 209 Soil Science Building, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. 48824.

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MEMOS

No profit potential, no pesticide: Development of at least two pesticides that would have been helpful to lawn care businessmen and other turf professionals has been halted due to what major pesticide manufacturers have apparently viewed as lack of profit potential. Much work had been done over the last few years by Ciba-Geigy Corp., Greensboro, N.C. on its CGA 12223, an insecticide largely targeted for grub control. Work has for the most part been stopped, although it may pick up again in the future. Also, American Hoechst Corp., Somerville, N.J. has also stopped its work on HOE 22870, a crabgrass postemergent herbicide, apparently for the same reason. Tom Perkins of Elanco Products Co., Indianapolis, Ind. has reported that it takes anywhere from eight to 10 years and between six and 10 million dollars to bring a pesticide from test tube to market, largely because of government data required, and this is the main reason why a substantial return on investment is needed for companies to pursue research. The turf market is naturally not as laden with profit potential as the agriculture market, and in many cases, this is where the research dollar is going.

Greatest show in turf: The phrase may be borrowed from a circus pr man's bag of tricks, but the educational sessions and equipment exhibits at the 49th Annual International Turfgrass Conference and Show earlier this year in San Antonio were the best and biggest ever. The show is sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and is largely centered on golf turf information and equipment, but there were many lawn care businessmen in attendance at the San Antonio conference. Apparently, many turf distributors who handle lawn care accounts as well as golf course and other accounts told their people about the show and urged them to attend. All told, there were 195 exhibitors of turf equipment and supplies and almost a full week crammed with turf educational sessions. In the next three years, the show will be in three different areas of the country, allowing lawn care businessmen to update themselves on the very latest in turf. This February the show moves to Atlanta; in February of 1980 it is in St. Louis; and in February of 1981 it moves out to the West Coast to Anaheim, Calif. For further information, check the Meeting Dates listings this month and every month in LAWN CARE INDUSTRY.

Lawn tractor outlook good: Robert Orthey, manager of market planning for riding mowers for Toro Co., Minneapolis, told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY that the industry shipped 420,000 front-engine riders last year. He estimates that the industry total will increase almost eight percent this year. Robert E. Drennan, vice president of sales for Massey-Ferguson, Des Moines, Iowa, agrees with this assessment and attributes the favorable sales outlook in part to a great deal of activity in residential building.

Small business blues: Small business won't make out as well under President Carter's tax plan as big business. Or so says the Senate Small Business Committee. Its analysis says companies with taxable income exceeding \$100 million a year will reap 60 percent of the benefits of Carter's tax cuts, while companies with taxable income under \$50,000 will get only four percent.

Allis-Chalmers wins award: The Lawn and Garden Equipment department of Allis-Chalmers Corp., Milwaukee, recently received an award from the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) in recognition of the department's safety education program. The award was presented at the OPEI annual convention held in La Costa, Calif.

Labor costs up: An employee who worked 50 weeks last year at the minimum wage will cost nearly 25 percent more to maintain this year for the same amount of work, reports Robert F. Lederer, executive vice president of the American Association of Nurserymen. The federal minimum wage has gone from \$2.20 to \$2.65 an hour. On top of that, he says, agricultural laborers have been brought under the Unemployment Compensation Act which, at a minimum, will cost employers \$180.20 on each employee working at the minimum. Social Security, which is taking its first relatively insignificant step (compared to what is in store for the future) will cost employers \$63.25 more than last year on this same minimum wage employee, Lederer said.

Average weekly pay: Average weekly pay of factory workers in January fell to \$232.06 from a revised \$241.67 in December, the Labor Department reported recently.



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At what point is a branch office justified?

One lawn care businessman who runs a chemical spray operation says he has got to have annual sales of from \$120,000 to \$125,000 to support a branch operation with one girl, a combined salesman/supervisor and three lawn specialists, says business consultant Jim Nelson.

Another company says an annual sales volume of \$80,000 is the basis for establishing a branch with an answering service.

Some telephone companies are now offering a "remote call forwarding" service which is like opening a branch office in another city. This service will bring to your headquarters office calls from customers in several predetermined areas. This "branch office" service can let you establish a local identity in an area with no additional personnel expense, and without acquiring expensive office space.

For example, the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area was serviced by ChemLawn Corp., Columbus, Ohio, through a branch office set up in suburban Richardson, just north of Dallas, for the last several years.

A prospective customer living in Fort Worth could call a Fort Worth number, and be connected with the Dallas branch office of ChemLawn. A substantial number of customers was built up in Fort Worth through this method, serviced out of the Dallas office.

This lawn care season for the first time, ChemLawn has opened up a separate branch office in the Fort Worth area. Thus, the company saved the costs of maintaining two branches while establishing the business in that metropolitan area.

TECH NOTES

How to determine fertilizer rates, costs

Most fertilizers contain the three major nutritive elements needed by a home lawn — nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. The figures on the fertilizer label indicate the percentage of each element contained in the above order.

For example, a 20-11-11 fertilizer contains 20 percent nitrogen, 11 percent phosphorus and 11 percent potassium by weight. Most fertilizers include more nitrogen than other elements because it is essential to all plants.

The amount of fertilizer to be applied is given in terms of "actual nitrogen", according to Thomas Graceffa, Rockford, Illinois-based landscape architect.

"For example, given 100 pounds of 20-11-11 fertilizer," he told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY,

"we know that 20 pounds is nitrogen. Therefore, to provide two pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet, you would apply 10 pounds of 20-11-11 fertilizer per 1,000 square feet" (30 percent of 10 pounds = two pounds actual nitrogen).

The following examples show how this application rate can be figured in a number of ways, depending on what type of fertilizer is used.

For example, say that you were dealing with a 10,000-square-foot lawn with a nitrogen requirement of two pounds per thousand square feet. If the fertilizer analysis was 20-11-11, 100 pounds would have to be applied. If the cost for a 50-pound bag is \$20, the total cost is thus

\$40 for the application.

For the same 10,000-square-foot lawn, with a fertilizer analysis of 10-5-5, 200 pounds would have to be applied. If the cost of the 50-pound bag is \$15, the total cost for the application is \$60.

Graceffa notes that it is important to calculate the relative costs of fertilizers based on the cost per pound of actual nitrogen rather than just the cost per pound of raw fertilizer. In the above example, for instance, the "cheaper" fertilizer was more expensive overall than the higher priced fertilizer where applied to yield two pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.

To obtain a copy of Graceffa's *Maintenance Guide for Trees and Shrubs, Groundcover*

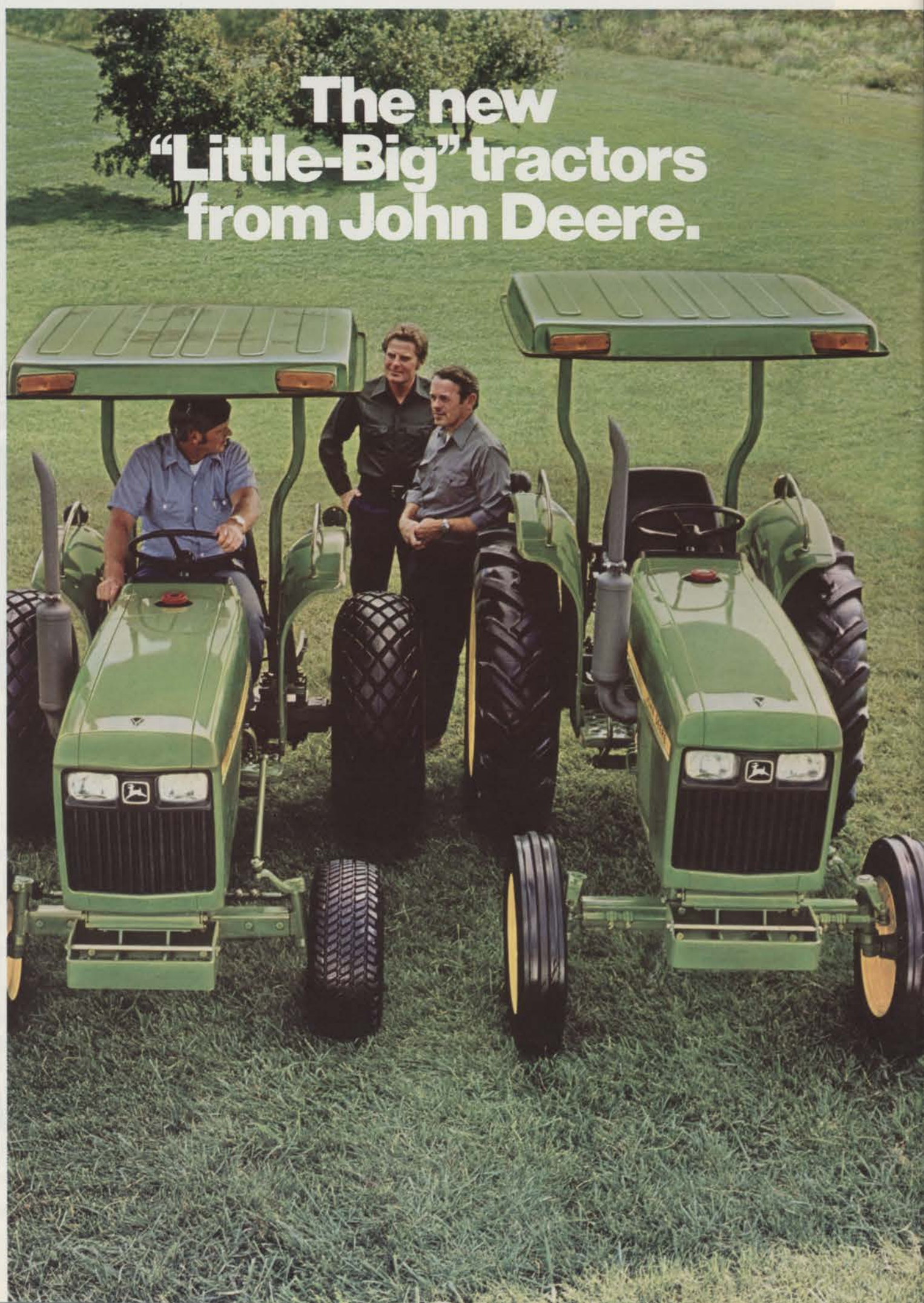
and Lawns, write him at 831 N. Church St., Rockford, Ill. 61103.

SPRINKLERS

Irrigation conference proceedings available

Copies of the proceedings from the 15th annual Turfgrass Sprinkler Irrigation Conference are now available. The event was held at the Lake Arrowhead Conference Center in southern California in June of last year.

To purchase any of the proceedings, contact Dr. Albert W. Marsh, Soils Department, University of California, Riverside, Calif. 92521.



TURF

Soil acidity affects the growth of turf

The primary nutritional problem existing on home lawns today is one of low soil pH, according to Dr. Stephen J. Donahue, extension specialist in soils and plant analysis at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Va.

This situation can only be rectified, he recently told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY, by additions of proper amounts of limestone to adjust pH to a more optimum, near-neutral level.

He said the level of soil acidity is usually determined by

a pH test. This test measures the amount of hydrogen (acid-forming) ion in the soil solution. A scale of zero to 14 is used, with a pH of 7.0 being neutral, less than 7.0 acid, and greater than 7.0 alkaline.

While the actual acid concentration of the soil is rarely low enough (less than pH) to cause direct injury to plants, the indirect effect of acidity on nutrient availability (solubility) and microbial activity has a pronounced effect on turf growth, he said.

Traditionally, low pH implies a lack of calcium as the primary cause of poor growth. However, in many instances the greatest injury to turf results not only from a reduction in plant available

calcium but also from excesses and deficiencies of other elements.

At low soil pH levels (high acidity), one of the most common problems is aluminum toxicity. The solubility of aluminum in the soil increases in logarithmic fashion as soil pH decreases, and below pH 5.5 it can reach toxic concentrations rapidly. The actual pH at which aluminum reaches toxic concentrations depends on the native level of aluminum in the soil. This can vary considerably.

Turfgrasses also differ in their tolerance to aluminum so that no one soil pH or aluminum level can be selected as a critical level. In general, the potential for aluminum toxicity for

most turfgrasses grown on acid mineral soils is greatest below pH 5.0, moderate between pH 5.0 and 5.5, and slight or negligible above pH 5.5.

Another nutrient found in toxic levels in very acid soils is manganese. While soils also vary in their native level of manganese, toxic levels do not usually occur above pH 5.5. Manganese toxicity is not nearly as widespread as aluminum toxicity.

In addition to aluminum and manganese toxicity, strongly acid soils (pH less than 5.5) tend to reduce the availability of phosphorus to plants. This is due to the complexing or tie-up of phosphorus by aluminum and iron which renders the phosphorus unavailable for plant uptake. In strongly acid soils, calcium and magnesium are also limiting, having been replaced by hydrogen and aluminum, both acid-forming ions. Depletion of these essential plant nutrients has an adverse effect on turf growth.

Soil acidity also affects the activity of soil microorganisms responsible for organic matter and thatch decomposition, and nitrogen fixation. While a neutral or near-neutral pH (6.0 to 7.0) favors the activity of these beneficial microorganisms, strongly acid conditions inhibit their activity, causing thatch build-up and a reduction in natural soil nitrogen supply.

Soil acidity decreases as the pH increases to 7.0. Above this level, the soil becomes alkaline and problems such as reduced availability of iron, manganese, copper, and zinc begin to occur.

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PESTICIDES

Certain uses allowed for chlordane, heptachlor

Velsicol Chemical Corp., Chicago, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the Environmental Defense Fund and other interested parties have reached an agreement permitting production of the insecticides heptachlor and chlordane for certain uses previously suspended.

The agreement permits certain agricultural uses for various periods, up to 1983, and is the culmination of proceedings pending since 1974. At that time, the EPA issued a notice of intent to cancel the products with the exception of termite control usage.

Under the terms of the agreement, there are no restrictions on applications outside the United States. Uses for termite control domestically and internationally will be continued. Most other U.S. home and lawn uses are to be discontinued. At some future time, however, Velsicol may apply for new registrations of the products.

NEWSMAKERS

Nate Robinson, formerly of **Tru Green**, Detroit, has been named general manager of lawn spray operations for **Yardmaster**, Mentor, Ohio. Also, Ted Durchik and Mark Iafelice have been named turf specialists. Company partners of the six-year-old firm are Kurt Kluznik and Rick Colwell.

Dr. James A. McAfee has joined **ChemLawn Corp.**, Columbus, Ohio, as a regional agronomist working out of its Dallas branch.

Dan Corun has been named manager of **Lawn King** of the

Severn, Millersville, Md. He had previously been a rigman and replaces Bob Tavenner.

Rollins Lawn Care, Atlanta, has announced branch managers for its three new offices. Ron L. Webb has been named branch manager of the company's new Memphis office. He was previously a botanist for the Goldsmith Civic Center in Memphis and holds degrees from Mississippi College and Memphis State University. William H. Fines has been named branch manager of the company's new Charlotte, N.C.



Webb



Fines



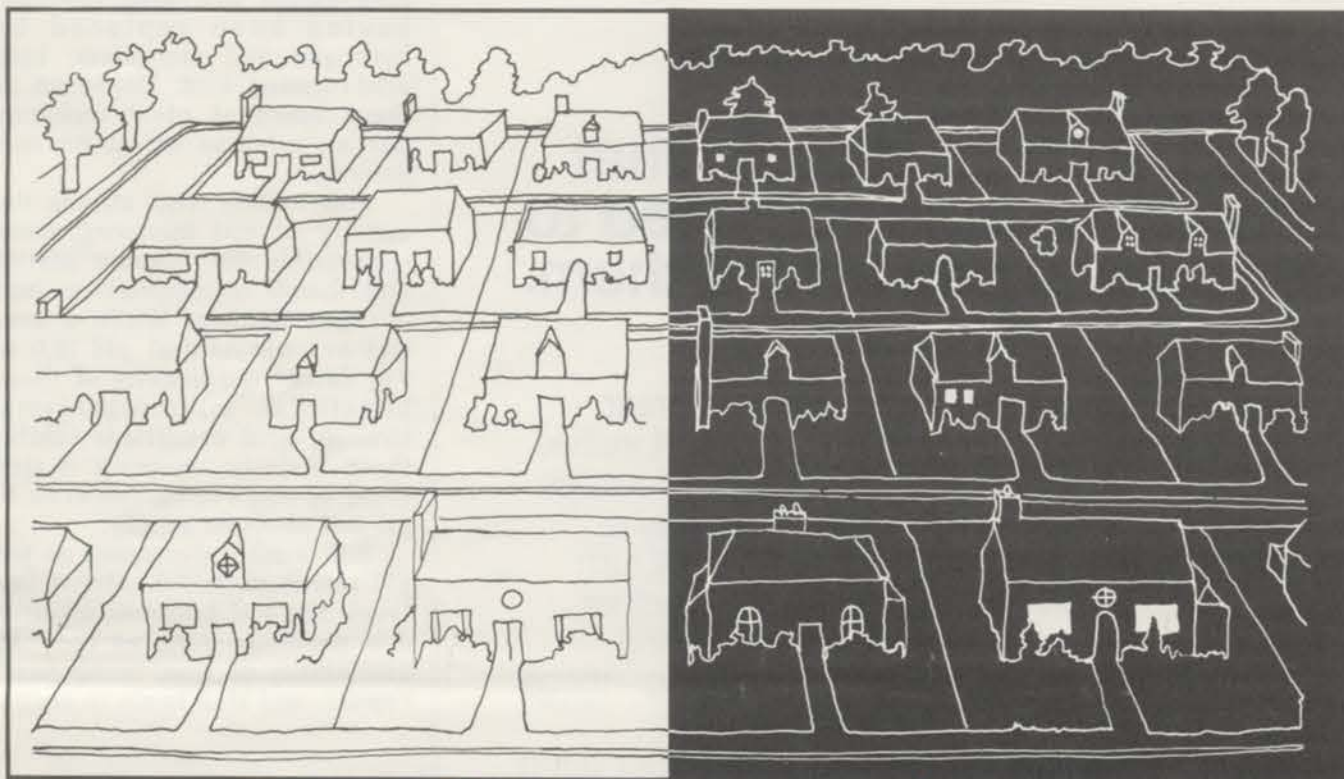
Crenshaw

office. He was previously with the Corenco Corp. of Tewksbury, Mass., where he held several executive positions, and is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island with a B.S. in agronomy. He was most recently

with the Massachusetts Farm Bureau. William Roger Crenshaw has been named branch manager of the company's new Augusta, Ga. office. He was previously with the Medical College of Georgia as a landscaping horticulturalist. He graduated from Clemson University with a B.S. in ornamental horticulture.

Davey Lawnscape, has announced a number of personnel appointments and change due to the opening of four new offices in Buffalo, Milwaukee, Philadelphia and Rochester, N.Y. In the Buffalo district, Dick Foote, former Pittsburgh sales and service representative will become district manager, and Akron technicians Kathy Maher and Jim Foote will be sales and service representatives. In the Milwaukee district, Bob Evans, former Cleveland sales and service representative, will become district manager, with Eric VanHorn and Dan Miller serving as sales and service representatives. The Philadelphia district will be headed by Kim Schaefer, former Pittsburgh sales and service representative. Mike Steve and Bill Graening will be sales and service representatives. In the company's Akron/Canton district, technicians John Reeves, Maurice Peoples and Steve Marshall have been appointed sales and service representatives. In the Cleveland district, technicians Mark Laube, Dan Babroski and Bob Cline have been appointed sales and service representatives. Technicians Ed Gruber and Mark Morgan have been appointed sales and service representatives in the Pittsburgh district. In the Detroit district, Dan Prospal has been appointed sales and service representative.

Toro Co., Minneapolis, has announced a number of appointments. Gary Holland, vice president of Toro and general manager of its new Outdoor Appliance Division, has named Lynn Long director of operations. Fred Coyne replaces Long as Outdoor Power Equipment Group director of purchasing. Holland also announced the promotion of Mark Hunsley to manager of the division's Hudson, Wis. plant. Also, James R. Loeffler, Jr. has been named quality assurance manager, and Douglas W. Meyers has been named traffic and warehousing manager. David M. Lilly has rejoined the board of directors of Toro and been named chairman



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of the board's executive committee.

Dave Zimmerman has joined **Lakeshore Equipment & Supply Co.**, Elyria, Ohio as representative for the Illinois-Indiana region. He is a February graduate of **Penn State's** two-year turf management program and a recipient of scholarship awarded by **TUCO Division of Upjohn**, Kalamazoo, Mich. During the 1976-77 season, he managed the Rockford offices of a lawn care business. Also, Howard Altman has joined the company as a representative for the eastern Michigan marketing area. He is 35 and a graduate of Penn State's two-year program also.

Harald Eriksen has been appointed assistant chief engineer at **Hypro Division of Lear Siegler, Inc.**, St. Paul, Minn. He has been with the company since 1973.

Gary Bailey has been named national sales manager for **Moody Sprinkler Co., Inc.**, Santa Ana, Calif. He has served with Moody in various marketing-sales positions for the past five years.

Dr. Paul L. Smeal, professor of horticulture at **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**, Blacksburg, Va. has been elected president of the American Society of Horticultural Science, southern region.

Douglas H. Creecy has been named sales specialist for **Diamond Shamrock Corp.**, Cleveland, in its Midwest region covering Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas. He will be responsible for the company's complete product line of chemicals, including Bravo 6F and Daconil 2787 fungicides, Dacthal and Bueno 6 herbicides, arsonates, plus a variety of speciality turf care products. He was previously advertising manager for the division.

Dr. August A. De Hertogh, professor of horticulture at **Michigan State University**, has been named head of the Department of Horticultural Science at **North Carolina State University**.

New Florida Turf-Grass Association officers are: president, David L. DeBra, executive vice president of operations of **DeBra Turf and Industrial Equipment Co.**, Hollywood; vice president, C. Wayne Sloan, director of golf courses, **Gulfstream Land & Development Corp.**, Plantation; secretary-treasurer, Joseph G. Yuzzi, executive golf course superintendent at **Woodlands Country Club**, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Members of the board include Frank H. Arnall, **Zaun Equipment, Inc.**, Jacksonville; Charles Butterworth, **Chase & Co.**, Sanford; Stanley F. Cruse, **Pursley Turfgrass Co.**, Palmetto; Paul L. Deets, **Woodbury Chemical Co.**, Mulberry; H. Anthony Kimball, **Turf Grow Nursery**, St. Augustine; Jack C. Russell, **Soil Fumigants, Inc.**, Orlando; and J. Robert Wegman, **Permanent Systems & Supply**,

Inc., Tampa.

Dr. Paul M. Alexander has been named staff agronomist for **Porter Brothers, Inc.**, Shelby, N.C.-based distributor of turf maintenance equipment and supplies and outdoor power equipment. He has served with the **U.S. Golf Association Green Section**, and as director of education for the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of America**. He will work with Porter Brothers customers on turf care problems, disease control, soil analysis and grounds maintenance problems.

The **Gravely Division** of the **Clarke-Gravely Corp.**, Clemmons, N.C. has named Bernard L. Biller as national branch manager, responsible for



Biller



Zulpa



Krupka

Gravely factory branch sales. Also, Zen Kulpa, has been named manager of government sales and national accounts.

Richard W. Krupka has been named consumer products sales planning manager for **Jacobsen**

Manufacturing Co., Racine, Wis. He is responsible for sales planning within the company's independent distribution channels. He will report to John Huston, sales manager of the Consumer Products Division.

Cut the cost of expensive horsepower and expensive manpower.



Bolens® HT-20 Tractor.

Jobs too small for big specialized equipment can add up to a punishing expense in manpower. Hauling. Mowing. Tilling. Grading. Loading. Trenching. Backfilling.

The intermediate size Bolens HT-20 Tractor can cut that expense by quickly adapting to over a dozen custom matched attachments including mower, tiller, bucket loader, back hoe, rakes, blades and brooms.

The foot operated hydrostatic transmission goes from forward to reverse without clutching or changing gears. Perfect for close-quarters work. Allows optimum power/speed combinations with hands free to operate hydraulics.

More than just a lawn and garden tractor, the HT-20 is powered by a 19.9 hp twin cylinder Kohler engine. The channeled steel frame, massive rear axle/differential and heavy duty front axle give a full day's work. Day after day.

Get more value from your big horsepower and expensive manpower. With the rugged HT-20. It fits right in-between. To save money on both ends.



Bolens Mulching Mowers.™

They cut the grass and the workload. In one pass. When a Bolens Mulching Mower cuts the grass, it also cuts and recuts the clippings into tiny particles that are blown down into the turf. There, they disappear and quickly decompose. No clippings. No clean-up. No thatch build-up. The fine mulch actually feeds the turf while the crew moves on to other jobs.*

3, 4 and 5 hp models are specially built for commercial and institutional use. Straight-thru steel axles, rugged all-steel deck, tough one-piece handle and positive cutting height adjustment. Bolens Mulching Mowers. Tough, economical answers to your continuing turf maintenance program.

*For a free copy of a University study on nitrogen return, contact FMC Corporation, Port Washington, Wisconsin 53074.

See the complete line of Bolens commercial power equipment at your nearest dealer. For his name and address, call 800-447-4700 toll-free anytime (in Illinois, call 800-322-4400). FMC Corporation, Port Washington, Wis. 53074.

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LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

APR 1978

7



A searching look into the future of the Lawn Care Operator:



There is every indication that the efficient operator who will do really superior work at fair prices, can build a long-range, substantial business. We can help in several ways.

If you have — or may establish — a Lawn Care Business, the outlook is good. The market potential, already large, is on the threshold of further growth because the sociological-economic factors are favorable.

Many families today, whether living in a house, condominium or garden apartment, want at least a handsome lawn, trees, flowers and ornamentals. They want the *benefits*, but without the work of tending such landscaping personally.

While many enjoy puttering with vegetables or flowers, they tend to shun lawn chores that involve seeding, feeding, weeding, de-bugging. The do-it-yourself trend is giving way to a new lifestyle.

Today, more and more women are profitably employed outside the home, sharing routine housework. With resulting higher combined earnings, *these families can well afford professional lawn care*, as well as golf, tennis, boating, summer cottages and long vacations.

Thus, while this opens new vistas for the Lawn Care Operator, his work is certain to be fraught with difficulties, including keen competition. Naturally, the fittest will survive and prosper. Now, what does this mean for you, the Lawn Care Operator?

It means you must provide exceptional service: Superior work, using efficient methods, the best of equipment and products. Above all, you must avoid needless complaints, call-backs and retreatments. You simply can't afford to "fight fires" or handle needless complaints which tarnish your

name, destroy profits, and waste time you urgently need to cultivate new business.

If you do your job well, your customers will stay with you; you won't have to re-sell them year after year.

The Gordon Turf Team can help you solve the single most persistent and troublesome problem of the turf industry — *weed control*.

Weed control will remain the thorniest bugaboo because weeds are *visible*. Failing to kill them brings costly complaints. In fact, you may have complaints even *after* the most thorough weed spray. The reason (and the cure) is crucial.

As you know, weeds don't magically disappear the same week you spray them. You know the best herbicides work slowly. But your customer may *not* know this ... and that's the problem.

Meet Trimec®, the solution

Unlike some herbicides that quickly "burn" the foliage but tend to leave the root alive, Trimec broadleaf herbicide is slow, thorough, efficient. It kills the *whole weed*, root and all. Here's why:

Trimec is a unique, patented formulation of 2,4-D, MCPP and Dicamba — unlike any other. Its exceptional power and slow, gentle action results largely from the synergism of its active components; from their interaction which produces weedkill strength far greater than the sum of the components separately. This *synergistic gain* multiplies Trimec efficiency so that smaller amounts of chemical can be fully effective on the greatest number of weeds, with a light dosage, continuously through the growing season — even at 50° F. or cooler.

Safeguards the environment

Trimec is ecologically sound and troublefree. Because its

strength relies greatly on synergism rather than on heavy concentrations of chemicals, root absorption is minimal. Thus it poses little threat to flowers, trees, ornamentals and tender grasses. "Drift" hazard is reduced. Biodegradable, precisely factory-formulated ... Trimec eliminates the need for on-site mixing and its chance of costly error.

Broad-spectrum control, lowest cost

Trimec controls the *widest range* of weeds — even hard-to-kill species — usually with one application. We're surprised if we find a weed that's Trimec-resistant.

Because of its unparalleled efficiency, Trimec does not cost more to use, *but less*. Comparisons show that Trimec costs less per acre of weed control than any other herbicide. You use fewer gallons, you seldom need retreatment, your total cost-per-acre — *the true measure of economy* — is lower.

Improved customer relations

Home owners who don't understand weed control often complain in panic, "My weeds are still alive!" We help you avoid such calls by providing an instructive door hanger. Left on the doorknob after each treatment, it explains Trimec's slow, thorough action, suggests patience, assures your customer his weeds are dying. This *advance* explanation stops many needless trouble calls, explains that you have indeed used the finest weed treatment available. A generous supply of door hangers is available with each Trimec order.



More than weed control

As your lawn service prospers — perhaps growing into services beyond mere weed-and-feed — Gordon's total commitment in the turf market will support your expansion.

Your Gordon distributor has a complete family of superior, tested products tailored for the turf professional. His technical expertise is freely available. Should you need it, he has a direct line to Gordon's Technical Service Department. This includes our separate Lawn Care Division, with a field specialist whose sole concern is providing product information and technical assistance to the Lawn Care Operator. For instance ...

Meet HERBI, a unique new portable sprayer

The HERBI illustrates our total involvement with lawn care. This *advance-design* sprayer was made expressly for problem areas and for those times when herbicides should be applied separately, apart from fertilizer. The HERBI story is summarized on the next page. See your distributor for complete information.

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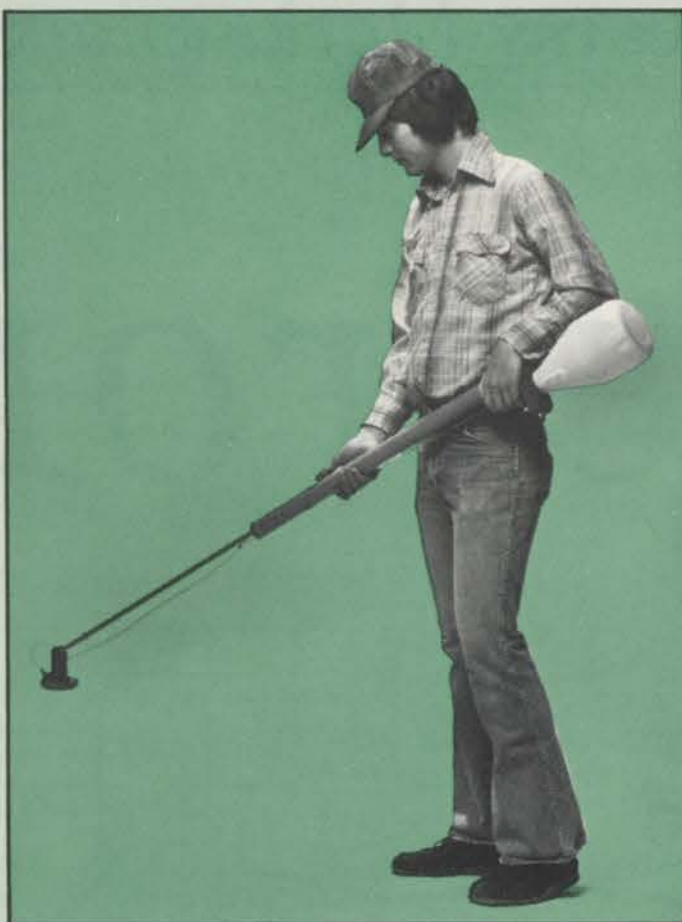
Controlled-droplet Application

HERBI: a new approach to applying herbicides

Herbi is a lightweight, portable sprayer of high efficiency. It lets a walking operator make Ultra Low Volume controlled-droplet applications on target, low to ground, with little drift. Ideal for smaller problem areas, and areas inaccessible to heavy equipment. Gives controllable, 4-ft. clean-cut swath close to trees and shrubbery, with excellent control in wind.

Battery-powered atomizer in head gives uniform 250-micron droplets; saves water, chemicals ... penetrates better. Three nozzles included for different solutions, emulsions and — with proper additive — wettable powders.

Fully self-contained; weighs 12 pounds loaded. Five-pint tank treats 33,000 sq. ft. or more at normal walking speed. Instruction manual and spare parts list included. Gordon distributors have full information.



Authorized Distributors Gordon Professional Turf Products

ALASKA

Palmer • Alamasu, Inc.

ALABAMA

Birmingham
• Norala Company, Inc. • Tieco, Inc.
Montgomery • Tieco, Inc.

ARIZONA

Phoenix
• Capitol Nursery Supply
• Target Chemical Company
Tucson • Copper State Chemical Co.

ARKANSAS

Alexander • Capital Equipment Co.

CALIFORNIA

Anaheim • Foster-Gardner, Inc.
Bakersfield • Abate-A-Weed Co.
Cathedral City • Butlers Mill, Inc.
Cerritos • Target Chemical Co.
Chula Vista • Wilbur-Ellis Company
Coachella • Foster-Gardner, Inc.
Manetca • Ramsey Seed Company
Newark • L & V Farm Sales, Inc.
Orange
• Robinson Fertilizer Co.
Oxnard • Coastal Ag. Chem.
Sacramento
• Orchard Supply Company
San Diego • Butlers Mill, Inc.
San Gabriel • J. Harold Mitchell Co.
San Jose
• Foster-Gardner, Inc.
• Moyer Chemical Co.
• Northern California Fertilizer Co.
• Target Chemical Co.
San Leandro • Custom Chemilene
Santa Ana
• Moyer Chemical Company
Santa Barbara
• Agri Turf Supplies, Inc.
Santa Rosa
• Purity Chemical Products Co.
South Gate City
• Los Angeles Chemical Co.

COLORADO

Arvada • S.A.J. Turf Products
Colorado Springs • Gorbey, Inc.
Denver
• Van Waters & Rogers
• Western Gard'n-Wise
Pueblo • Pueblo Chemical & Supply

CONNECTICUT

Devon • Somers Turf Supplies
Greenwich
• Emanuel Shemin Greenhouses & Nurs.
Hazardville
• Old Fox Chemical, Inc.
So. Windsor
• Turf Products Corporation

DELAWARE

Wilmington • Turf Enterprises

FLORIDA

Homestead
• Atlantic Fertilizer & Chemical
Jacksonville • Bingham Seed Co.

Pompano Beach
• Swift Agricultural Chemical Corp.
Pensacola
• Gulf Shore Turf Supply, Inc.
• Tieco Gulf Coast
Sanford • Chase & Company
Winterhaven
• Swift Agricultural Chemical Corp.

GEORGIA

Atlanta • Regal Chemical Co.
College Park • Stephenson Chemical Co.
Conyers • Lawn & Turf, Inc.
Doraville • Georgia Golf & Garden
Ft. Valley
• Woolfolk Chemical Works, Inc.

HAWAII

Hilo • Occidental Chemical Co.
Honolulu • Occidental Chemical Co.
Kahului • Occidental Chemical Co.
Lihue • Occidental Chemical Co.

IDAHO

Boise • Steve Regan Co.
Caldwell • Wasatch Chemical Co.
Idaho Falls
• Wasatch Chemical Co.
Rupert
• Wasatch Chemical Co.

ILLINOIS

Barrington
• Olsen Distributing Co.
Bloomington
• Professional Turf Specialty
Chicago • George A. Davis, Inc.
W. Chicago • Turf Products, Ltd.
Decatur
• Scruggs-Drake Equipment, Inc.
E. Peoria
• Leon Short & Sons, Inc.
Peoria • Behm & Hageman, Inc.
Geneseo • C. D. Ford & Sons
Morton Grove
• V-G Supply Company
Rockton
• Turf Management Supply
Springfield
• Drake-Scruggs Equipment, Inc.
Wheeling • Arthur Clesen, Inc.

INDIANA

Indianapolis
• Desco Chemical, Inc.
• Cory Orchard Supply Co.
Nappanee • Desco Chemical, Inc.

IOWA

Cedar Rapids
• Hawkeye Seed Co., Inc.
Council Bluffs • Leisure-Aid
Davenport • Tri-State Toro Co.
Des Moines • Toro Service Center
W. Des Moines
• Big Bear Turf
• Resthaven Turf Service
Elkader • Meyer Equipment Co.
Iowa City • Little Wheels, Ltd.
Sioux City • W. R. Anderson Dist. Co.
Waterloo • Foster's, Inc.
Waukegan • Baer Ag Supply
West Burlington • Brayton Chemical, Inc.

KANSAS

Kansas City
• Pest Control Supplies
• Rhodes Chemical Co.
Salina • The Landsco Corporation
Wichita
• Bartels & Shore Chemical Co.
• Champion Turf Equipment, Inc.
• Robert S. Wise Company

KENTUCKY

Florence
• George W. Hill & Co., Inc.
Louisville
• Bunton Seed Co., Inc.
• Ky-Inna Turf Supply Co., Inc.

LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge
• Gulfshore Turf Supply
• Wyche's Golf Course Specialties, Inc.
Covington
• Tammany Turf & Supply, Inc.
New Orleans
• Southern Specialty Sales Co., Inc.
Plain Dealing
• Wyche Golf Course Specialties, Inc.

MARYLAND

Baltimore
• Cornell Chemical & Equip. Co., Inc.
• Miller Chemical & Fertilizer
Landover • Vaughan Seed Company

MASSACHUSETTS

Newton Center
• Grounds Equipment Co., Inc.
Waltham
• Farm Bureau Coop Assn., Inc.
West Newton • The Clapper Company

MICHIGAN

Birmingham
• W. F. Miller Company
Detroit
• Terminal Sales Corporation
Grand Rapids
• Mollema & Son, Inc.
• Parmender & Andre
Hartford • Desco Chemical, Inc.
Kalamazoo • J. J. Dill Company
Royal Oak • Lawn Equipment
Saginaw • Burdick Seed Company
Taylor • Turf Supplies, Inc.
Traverse City • Fergusons Company

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis • Minnesota Toro, Inc.
St. Paul
• R. L. Gould & Company
• Turf Supply Company
Savage
• The Castle Chemical Co., Inc.

MISSISSIPPI

Jackson
• Southern Seed Company, Inc.

MISSOURI

Chesterfield
• Beckman Turf & Irrigation
Grandview • The Landsco Corp.

• Robison's Lawn & Golf Supply
Kansas City
• Bartels & Shore Chemical Co.
• Champion Turf Equip., Inc.
• Standard Seed Company
Maryland Heights
• Outdoor Equipment Co.
St. Louis
• Crown Chemicals • Kitten & Bear
Springfield
• Champion Turf Equip., Inc.

MONTANA

Billings • Turf Aid Dist. Company
Helena • Mr. Turf

NEBRASKA

McCook • Cornbelt Chemical
Morrill
• Jirion Agri Chemicals, Inc.
Omaha
• Big Bear Equip., Inc.
• Midwest Toro • The Yard Company
• Leisure-Aid
• Tri-Valley Corporation

NEVADA

Las Vegas
• Clark County Whol. Merc. Co.
North Las Vegas
• Las Vegas Fertilizer Co., Inc.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Greenland • Turf Specialty, Inc.

NEW JERSEY

Boundbrook
• Loft Seed Company
• Vaughan-Jacklin Corporation
Freehold • Green Hills Turf Supply
Maplewood • Pierson's Mill Company
Mountainside • Andrew Wilson, Inc.
Rahway • Ferti-Soil Company
Saddle Brook • The Terre Company
West Caldwell
• Rockland Chemical Co.
Yardville • Jep Sales, Inc.

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque
• Albuquerque Chemical Co., Inc.
Roswell
• Roswell Seed Company, Inc.

NEW YORK

Farmingdale • Wagner Seed Company
Hamburg • Eaton Equipment Company
Hawthorne • Metro Milorganite
Hauppauge • Maxwell Turf, Inc.
Jamaica • J & L Adikes, Inc.
Bergen • Lawn Medic
Rexford • S. V. Moffett, Inc.
South Hampton
• James H. Lynch, Inc.
Lincolndale
• Westchester Turf Supply Co.
Syracuse • Agway, Inc.
W. Henrietta • S. V. Moffett, Inc.

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte • Seedmen, Inc.
Shelby • Porter Brothers, Inc.
Winston Salem • Goltra, Inc.

OHIO

Canton • Letherman Seed Company
Cincinnati
• Century Toro Dist. Inc.
• Thorton Wilson
Cleveland
• Sidney L. Dryfoos Co.
• U.S. Garden Sales, Inc.
Columbus
• Century Toro Dist. Inc.
• W. R. Grace & Company
Dayton
• Century Toro Dist. Inc.
Elyria
• Lakeshore Equipment & Supply Co.
Findlay • Desco Chemical, Inc.
Mantua • John R. Skinner Co.
Toledo
• Century Toro Dist. Inc.

OKLAHOMA

McAlester • Tonys Chemical House
Oklahoma City
• Estes Chemicals, Inc.
Tulsa
• All Best, Inc.
• Thompson-Hayward Chemical Co.
• Wait Mig. & Sales Co.

OREGON

Portland
• The Charles H. Lilly Co.
• Van Waters & Rogers
• Wilbur-Ellis Company

PENNSYLVANIA

Doylestown • Philadelphia Toro
Hanover
• Miller Chemical & Fert. Corp.
Harleysville • Geiger Corporation
Horsham • Pocono Supply Company
Lebanon • Lebanon Chemical Corp.
Malvern • Fisher & Son Co., Inc.
Philadelphia
• Farm & Golf Course Supply Co., Inc.
Phoenixville
• Lawn & Golf Supply
Pittsburgh
• E. H. Griffith, Inc.
• Krigger & Company
Reading • Reading Bone Fertilizer
Wycombe • Histan Supply

RHODE ISLAND

East Providence
• Old Fox Chemical, Inc.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Inman
• Woolfolk Chemical Works, Inc.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Sioux Falls • C & R Supply Company

TENNESSEE

Knoxville • Regal Chemical Co.
Memphis
• Axon Corporation • Bob Ladd, Inc.
• Oldham Chemical Co., Inc.
Nashville
• Central South Turf Dist.
• Tieco, Inc.

TEXAS

Amarillo • Amarillo Seed House
Dallas
• Chemical & Turf Specialty Co.
• Van Waters & Rogers
El Paso • El Paso Turf Supply
Paris • Estes Chemical, Inc.
Waco • Estes Chemical, Inc.
Wichita Falls • Estes Chemical, Inc.

UTAH

Orem • Wasatch Chemical Div.
Salt Lake City
• Wasatch Chemical Div.

VIRGINIA

Chesapeake • Turf & Garden Div.
Harrisonburg • Wetzel Seed Company
Richmond
• Richmond Power Equip. Co., Inc.
Roanoke
• Agri-Turf Products Co., Inc.
• Miller Chemical & Fertilizer

WASHINGTON

Kent • Van Waters & Rogers
Renton • Pacific Agro Company
Seattle
• The Charles H. Lilly Co.
• Western Farmers Association
Tacoma • NuLife Fertilizers

WASHINGTON, D.C.

• Lea's Green Meadows, Inc.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston • Youngs, Inc.

WISCONSIN

Chilton • Horst Distributing Co.
Elm Grove
• Reinder Bros. Turf Equipment
Milwaukee
• Loft-Kellogg Seed, Inc.
Sun Prairie
• Turf Management Supply

Detroit

The best place to start a lawn care business should have plenty of people, with money, who don't have the time or the inclination to take care of their lawns themselves, says Art Brown, owner of Great Lakes Lawn Spray, Farmington Hills.

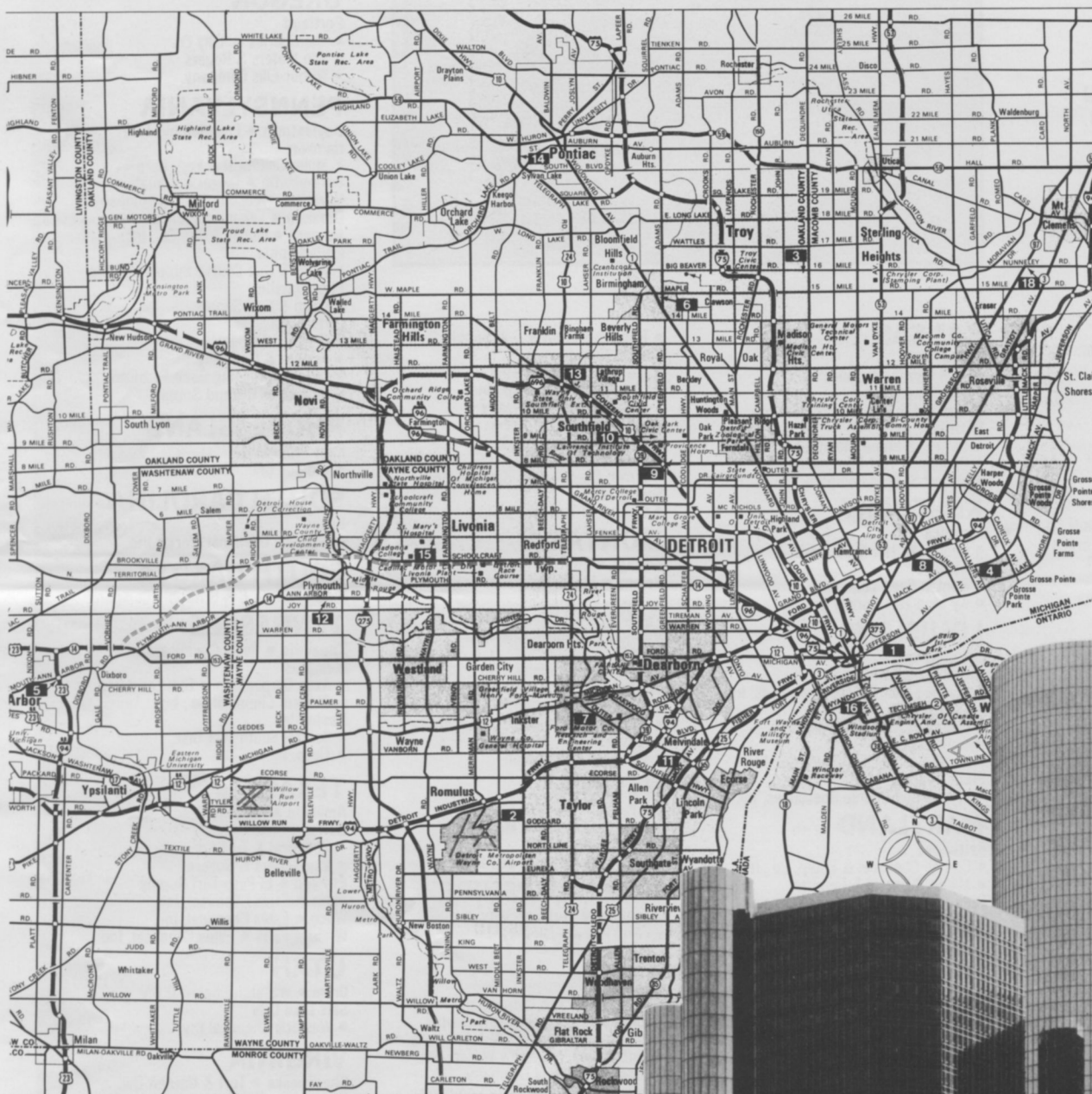
And, he says, the Detroit metropolitan area fits the bill just fine.

The metropolitan area, including Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, has about 4.4 million people and 930,000 single-family homes, and no matter how you cut it, that is an awful lot of lawn care business potential.

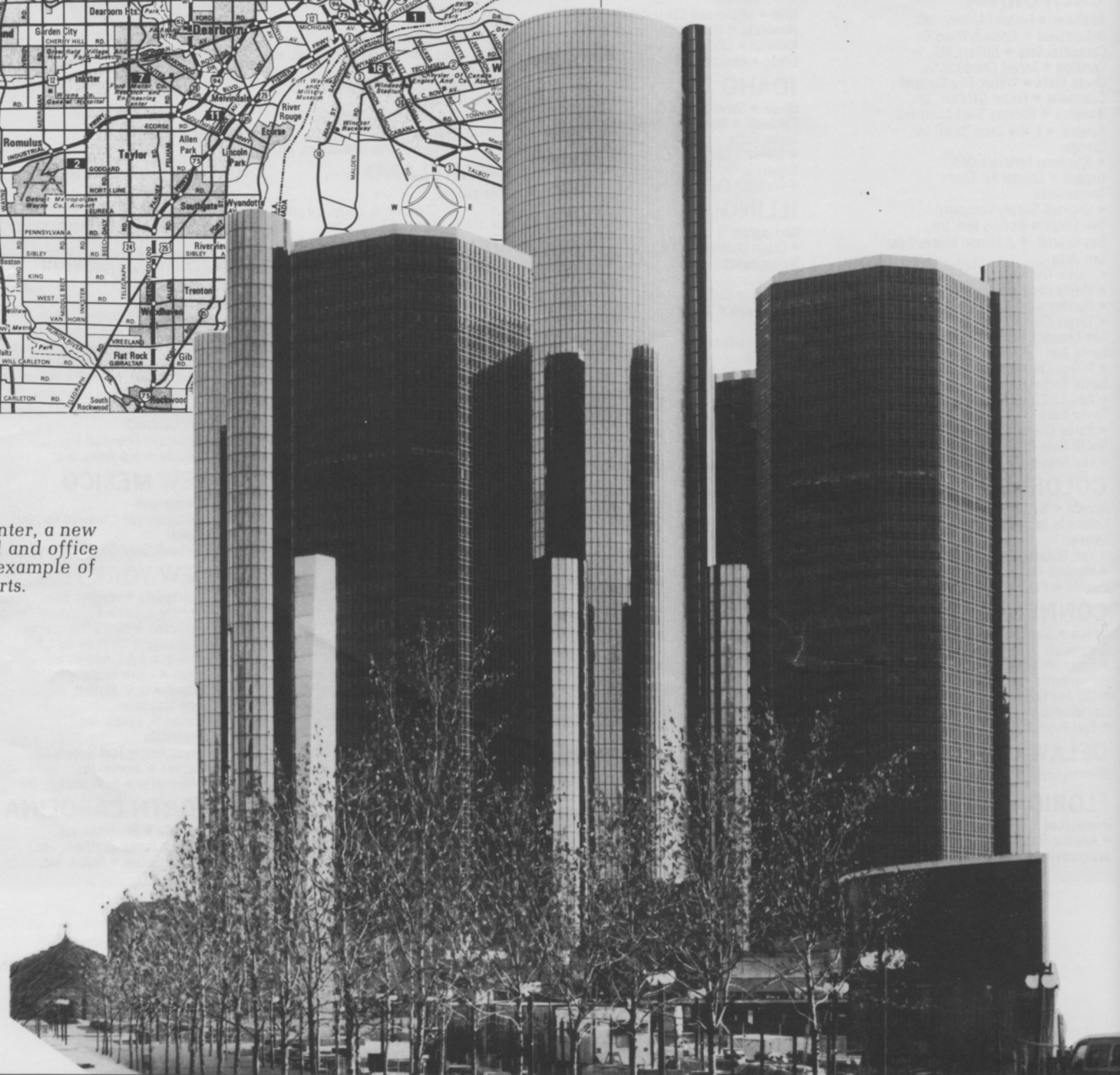
It provides plenty of territory for the 150 lawn care businessmen that operate there, Brown says. And most of them will agree it is a highly competitive market, and, in some ways, just about "saturated".

"If you start now it will take you three or four years to show much of a profit, and five years to realize a comfortable living," says one veteran lawn care businessman. Another comments: "If you start on a shoestring, you'll have to starve for awhile."

However, if a new operator in the Detroit area can survive for a few lean years, there is a nice profit to be made. Some businessmen interviewed said that their profits are between 10 and



Detroit's Renaissance Center, a new multi-million dollar hotel and office building complex, is an example of the city's rebuilding efforts.



20 percent annually.

Even though lawn care is a growing industry in Detroit, the automobile is still king. To illustrate this, Nelson Schaller, manager of ChemLawn Corp.'s office in suburban Pontiac, says: "One of our customers works for General Motors. We sent an International truck over to his house. He would not let the crew work and even sent the truck back. We had to send a GM truck over. People sure are funny sometimes."

Auto manufacturers may provide a few headaches now and then, but the auto is Detroit's golden egg and helped make it one of the top cities in the country in terms of personal income. Detroit production workers average hourly earnings of \$7.16, compared to the national average of \$5.19. The average wage rate in Wayne County in 1976 was \$16,761.

The region's wealth is as also reflected in a recent housing construction boom; building was up last year from a seven-year low, according to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments.

Oakland and Macomb counties are the top areas for development. The rural county pastureland is feeding bulldozers, and land is being cleared for new buildings. Oakland building permits totaled 5,068 housing units and Macomb authorized 2,893 for the first half of last year. Actually, Wayne County, where Detroit is located, lost homes because of demolitions. However, the western Wayne suburbs, including Canton, Wayne, Westland, Inkster, Garden City and Livonia, authorized 1,719 units.

What all this new building means for the lawn care business is that people are moving and building trends are perhaps changing.

While Art Brown says that apartment buildings and condominiums are the place to look in the future because of their increasing numbers, his brother Al, Altop Lawnspray Service, Sterling Heights, disagrees.

"There is not enough money in condominiums and too many headaches," he says.

Lawn businessmen should not think that new homes will immediately mean new customers, says Jim Brown, Taylor Lawn Service, Romulus. He is another Brown brother. (See story about the Brown brothers in this issue.)

Brown Brothers Find Their Roots In Lawn Spraying

What the Kennedys are to politics, and what the Fords are to the automobile industry, the Browns are to lawn spraying in the metropolitan Detroit area.

Between the four Brown brothers — Art, Al, Bob and Jim — they have more than 41 years of lawn spraying experience under their collective belts. And what's more, they all operate separate lawn spraying businesses in Detroit.

The brothers' interest in lawn spraying did not come from parental influence by any means.

Al recalls: "Our father, who was in the advertising business, didn't even cut the grass. We had to do it with a lawn mower with steel wheels."

However, their uncle was involved in landscaping and they worked for him at various times.

Al, 40, was the first to start in the lawn spray business in 1966. Prior to this, he worked for his uncle and for Wayne County

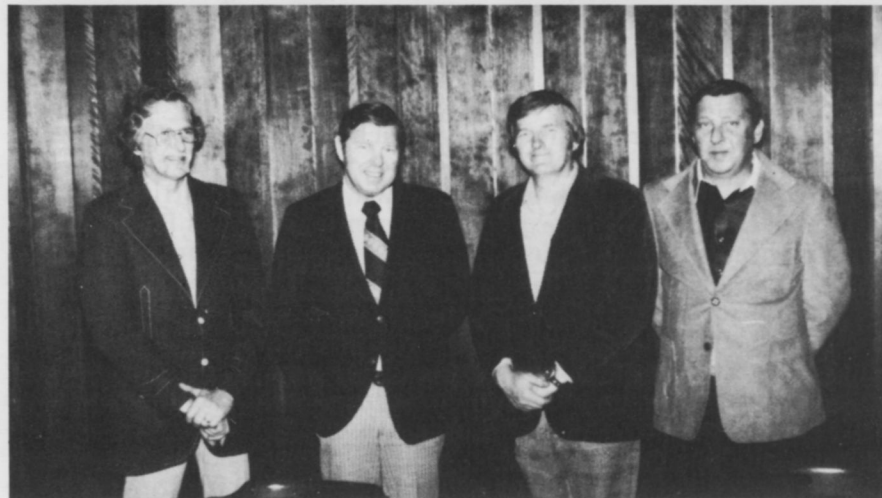
"Usually they want to take care of the grass for the first two years. Either because they don't have the money, or it is the novelty of their own home and they want to do the work," he says.

Despite the growth around the city, Detroit, like other Northeastern and Midwestern cities, is facing pollution, crime, unemployment, loss of jobs, white flight to the suburbs and a declining tax base.

The city, once known for its motors, has become more noted for its murders and unemployment lines. To attract business investments, city officials are offering tax breaks and subsidies and trying to improve the city's image.

Part of image program is promoting the city's newly-built Renaissance Center, a multi-million dollar downtown complex. Even the telephone book cover proudly displays the center.

Just as image is important to a city, it is just as crucial to an industry. Since lawn care is a relatively new business and composed of mostly small, indepen-



"Wouldn't Dad be proud of us now?," says one of the four Brown brothers, who have 41 years in the lawn spraying business. They are: Jim Brown, (left), Art Brown, Bob Brown and Al Brown.

spraying trees.

His success was an example to Bob, 42, and Jim, 47, who entered the business in 1968 and 1967 respectively. Art, 46, decided to join the family business in 1970. "Al was the stalking horse," Art says.

What happens when their bidding for customers conflicts?

"If Bob is bidding on the same account as me, I'll back off," Al said. However, they rarely compete with each other because their areas of operation are different.

dent operators, it has not promoted its image through mass media in the past because of advertising costs.

Until ChemLawn Corp. came to Detroit in 1972, most in the business say they had a hard time selling themselves to the public.

"ChemLawn has done a lot for the business. They are excellent promoters with clean trucks and uniforms. I'm thankful they came to Detroit," says one lawn care businessman.

The image sword cuts both ways, however. "What hurts our business is for someone to botch a fertilizing job. And he drives around in a station wagon hauling a trailer. It is not a first-class image that makes you look good," says Bob Brown, Michigan Lawn Spray Service, Sterling Heights.

The best way to project a good image is to provide a good service. The number one service problem in Detroit is *Fusarium* blight, which strikes hard against Merion bluegrass, common in the area.

"*Fusarium* is the Dutch Elm disease of our business," says Al Brown.

The blight is believed to be caused by nematodes injuring grass and making it more susceptible to the fungus.

A survey of lawn sprayers by the Lawn Sprayers Association of Michigan showed that fewer companies were treating the problem with chemicals than in past years. "We're finding that more companies are throwing in the towel," says Art Brown.

One way to treat *Fusarium* is with benomyl, marketed under the trade name Tersan 1991 by Du Pont Co., Wilmington, Del. But lawn businessmen in Detroit usually shy away from its use because of its expense. Tom Brune, Atwood Lawnsprayer Service, Sterling Heights, says he advises his customers asking about *Fusarium* blight to purchase the fungicide, but "I never say it is a cure-all."

Lawn businessmen advise their customers to water their lawns early in the day to help reduce the chances of the disease. Also, when possible, they suggest blending bluegrasses not found to be susceptible.

Another problem lawn businessmen face is insects. They

"If you start on a shoestring, you'll probably have to starve for awhile."

Detroit from page 11

said the most common pests are sod webworms and grubs. Most use Dursban and Diazinon, but say they do not leave the necessary residual quality to be effective in controlling the insects. Diazinon is marketed by Ciba-Geigy Corp., Greensboro, N.C., and Dursban is marketed by Dow Chemical Co., Midland, Mich. Most interviewed complain about the banning of DDT and chlordane because they said these two chemicals provided the best results for controlling pests.

However, one owner said he refrained from using chlordane when it was available because of its residual quality. "I did not want to do anything that would harm the environment. I was frightened about it (chlordane) because of its environmental effects."

Chlordane's usage for lawn care was banned by the federal Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA is a subject of lawn businessmen's criticisms, and so are other governmental policies.

Like other states, Michigan requires pesticide applicators to pass a certification exam to become licensed applicators.

Art Brown airs some common complaints about the exam that other lawn sprayers share. "The exam is not specific enough about lawn spraying. A lot of the material has to do with agriculture."

Likewise some training sessions at Michigan State University focused too heavily on problems not related to lawn sprayers. But veteran owners say the trend is changing towards more concentration on lawn spraying and their business problems.

Besides government regulation, lawn businessmen complained about low pricing or "low balling" by firms.

Operators pointed to two sources causing "under pricing."

One is underestimating the square footage of a lawn by salesman. "The salesman may underestimate the lawn by as much as 30 percent. He knows he does not have to care for the lawn, and he still gets his commission," says Bob Brown.

Secondly, companies breaking into the market will sometimes underbid competitors with the hope of getting volume business to offset low profits. "They eventually defeat themselves with un-business like practices," says Brune.

Brune and Art Brown say the companies eventually overcommit themselves and go out of business because they don't have the capital or manpower to keep up the volume.

Just as bad as underpricing is overpricing, says Jim Brown. "It gives the business a bad name."

In estimating the average cost of a 5,000-square-foot lawn per application, operators pegged the cost at between \$15 and \$18. The number of recommended applications ranged from four to six.

They were unable to set the

market price of the average house that receives lawn care service. Roy Simpson, Fertileze Lawn Spray, Madison Heights, says the market price of his customers' homes ranges between \$30,000 to \$50,000.

Detroit is a city for lawn businessmen. It has money and people with outside interests, which keeps them away from lawn care.

It's a good area for lawn care say the successful businessmen. Currently, ChemLawn maintains four metropolitan branches and Davey Lawnscape, Kent, Ohio is starting in the area. So the market has a mixture of the bigs and independents.

The metropolitan area's expanding potential is tied to the vitality of the central city, which is trying to attract businesses and spur the region's growth.

The Detroit market is getting tighter but probably has not reached its saturation point.

Besides the nine company representatives, interviewed for this story, other lawn care companies in the Detroit area include: Bye & Associates Landscape Co., Canton; Dun-Rite Service, Southgate; Combs Gardening Service, Detroit; Spearmans Snow and Lawn Service, Redford Township; T-M Landscape Co., Southgate; C & T Landscaping, Wyandotte; Weed No More Lawn Spray, Southgate;

Peterson Lawn & Landscaping, Ypsilanti; Chem-Green Corp., Sterling Heights; Danan Lawn Care, Auburn Heights; Robert J. Hoffman Landscaping, Union Lake.

A Mini-Computer

He got into the business because he liked the outdoors, but today he sprays one, maybe two, lawns a year.

But Tom Brune, Atwood Lawnspray Service, Sterling Heights, isn't complaining one bit. His interests have moved indoors somewhat to focus on his new Burroughs L-5 "mini-computer," which he says saved him substantial time and money last year, not to mention streamlining his operation.

Brune introduced the system last year for two reasons. First, his accounts receivable were out of control. Lawns were being sprayed when the customers were still past due on paying for their last application.

Second, prior to installation of the computer, Brune's drivers had to handle paperwork after completing each job. Drivers had to fill out cards and invoices for each customer. Brune figured it took up to five minutes for each account and a lot of potential production time in the course of a day.

"I don't make one dime until there is something coming out the business end of the sprayer," he said. "The computer gives my drivers more time to spray," he said.

According to his computations, the monthly payment for the computer is paid for by

People From Detroit Sound Off

For Nelson Schaller, the manager's position in ChemLawn Corp.'s Pontiac office gives him just what he wants — a little bit of country and a chance to develop people's skills.

The Ohio native, who grew up on a farm, says, "What I like most about my job is developing people. I like to take a guy who does not know much about turf and show him what it is all about."

Also, the job takes Schaller back to the country, which he prefers to urban living. His branch is located in a developing rural area.

"The most difficult part of the

job is educating the customer. Getting their cooperation to just water their lawns is important. They think you have the miracle cure and they don't have to do anything," says Schaller, who joined the company in 1972.

Getting renewal contracts back with the words "Thank you for your good service" written on them makes up for a lot of complaints, says Bill French, Down River Lawn Service, Inc., Trenton.

A 23-year veteran of lawn spraying, French does not regret leaving his factory job to start his business. "In the factory, I felt I

could not afford to turn down overtime. Now I can set my own hours."

French got into the business after seeing an ad in a trade magazine about lawn spraying equipment. "It was by accident that I got involved."

He credits a lot of his business success to his wife, who handles the books for his company. He has almost 1,000 accounts, operates three trucks and employs eight workers.

A guitar and a 1950 flatbed truck started Al Brown's, Altop Lawnspraying Service, Sterling Heights, lawn spraying career.

"I thought I would give it a try. So I bought a 1950 Ford flatbed truck and traded an old guitar for a used tank and made a spray rig out of it," he says.

That was in 1966. Today he has about 1,300 accounts, five workers and four trucks. Also, he has three brothers in the same business. (See related story).

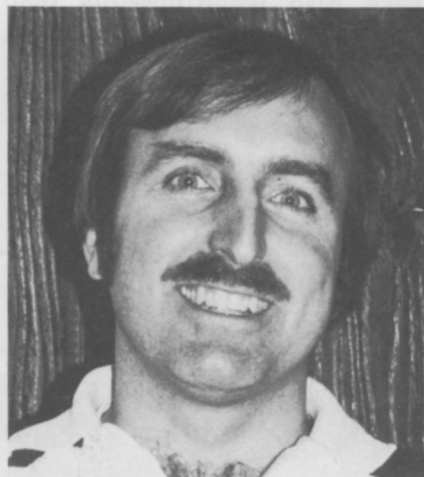
"What I don't like most about the business, the bookwork, I don't have to worry about because that is her business," he says. Brown's wife keeps the company books.

Roy Simpson, Fertileze Lawn Spray, Madison Heights, is in a family business and wants to keep it that way.

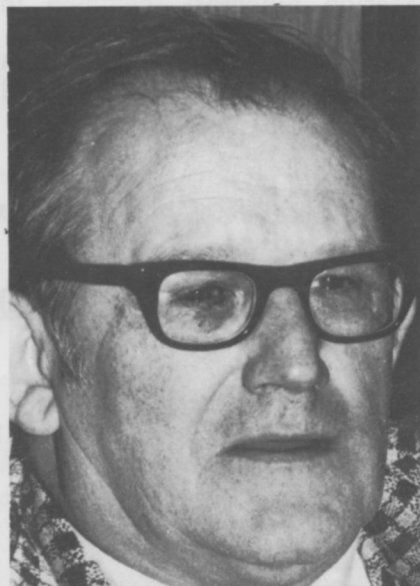
His father started the lawn spraying business, and Roy thinks that his son will continue it. "I don't want to get too big. I like a family-size business."

Previously, Simpson sold office supplies which prepared him for the office-work end of

Nelson Schaller



Bill French



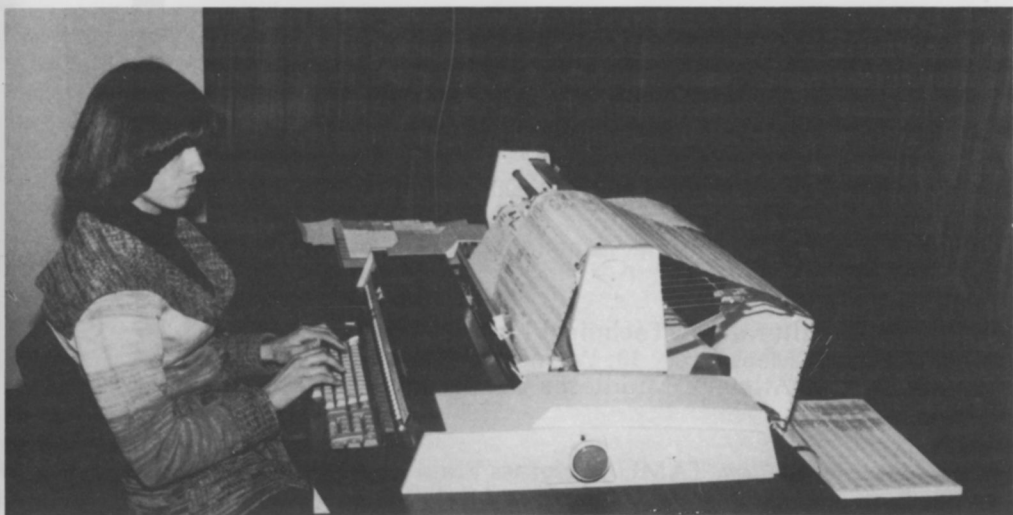
Al Brown



Roy Simpson



Is Tom Brune's Latest Streamlining Effort



Office worker Mary Lu Trombley types on a mini-computer keyboard. The computer has modernized Tom Brune's (below) lawn care operations.

money saved in one week of computerized invoices.

Operated by an office worker, the machine performs these functions:

- It prints invoices, which the driver takes on his route. They don't need the standard route cards.

- It will not issue an invoice for someone who has not paid for the last application. Brune calls it his "zero credit system," and he has cut his outstanding accounts 10 times what they used to be.

- It posts payments to accounts when they are made.



- It prints names and addresses of customers who are 15 days overdue on their bills.

- It can keep a running sales total that lets Brune know where he is in terms of dollars coming in at any given time of the month.

- It prints the labels for the annual renewal mailing. A job that used to take a month is now finished in two days, he says.

The computer can also be programmed to handle payroll and expense bookkeeping, but Brune says he does need those services at present.

He said the cost of the computer was \$10,000, and that he spends \$1,200 annually for a service contract. It has been very dependable.

Besides saving time for bookkeepers and drivers, the computer also has made it possible for Brune to expand without hiring additional office help. He added 1,000 accounts to his existing 2,000 accounts this lawn care season by purchasing another company. He says the computer will pick up the additional accounting work.

Brune became interested in lawn spraying while working for a Detroit-area landscaper and entered the business in 1970. Before the landscaping job, he was a high school social studies teacher in Akron, Ohio.

While at the high school, the lawn sprayer was a football and cross country coach. Although he has left coaching, Brune still oozes with the enthusiasm of a coach.

"I left teaching because I was dissatisfied with being indoors all day," he said. "I had worked summers in landscaping and lawn maintenance. But even though, today it is rare that I get out to do any troubleshooting or lawn spraying," he says.

"Now I am more into streamlining and management," he says. "I like this business because you can be your own boss. What I don't like is that the work is seasonal," he says.

His streamlining movement has included customizing his service vehicles and a daily cost analysis for every truck to see where the dollars are coming and going.

The lean, ex-teacher started his business with a truck that he bought by trading in his used Volkswagen. Today he has five service vehicles and 13 employees.

"I don't want to become the K-Mart of lawn sprayers with a big business and bigger headaches," he says. Instead, Brune is satisfied to make a tidy profit and begin work on his next streamlining project.

the business, but there is nothing to prepare a business for rises in fixed costs.

"My number one complaint is that after you've set your prices in the spring there is an increase in gas or insurance," he says.

Fertilize employs four full time workers and one part-time worker, uses three trucks and has 1,000 accounts.

What irritates Jim Brown, Taylor Lawn Care, Romulus, the most is a dishonest worker.

"I don't like it and get disappointed when I have a man who I think is a good worker but find out that he is stealing," he says.

He likes the freedom the job offers. One of those freedoms is having time twice a week to ride the horses that he raises. Also, he

likes seeing the faces of satisfied customers.

He has six workers and two trucks.

"Sometimes working in the pattern making shop, I would just get numb," says former-machinist Bob Brown, now owner of Michigan Lawn Spray Service, Sterling Heights.

The dull six-day a week machine job prompted Brown to look into something else — the lawn spraying business, which gives him a chance to call his own shots.

He has five workers, four vehicles and 1,300 accounts. One of his vehicles is a Suzuki Jeep, which he uses to spray city parks and baseball diamonds.

It carries a 100-gallon tank and can cover an acre in three

minutes, he says. Although it is limited to open spaces, it saves a lot of time.

Art Brown, Great Lakes Lawn Spray, is one of the best jugglers around.

On any given day, Brown keeps three businesses going at once. The pipe-smoking, briefcase carrying Farmington Hills businessman runs a lawn spray business, advertising business and a publishing business. "All of them are full time."

"One of the reasons I like lawn spraying is that I like the smell of grass," he says with a smile. Prior to starting in lawn spraying, Brown was in advertising and publishing.

"When you have good people working for you, it's possible," he says explaining how the busi-

nesses run all at once. His lawn spray business has five trucks, three workers and 800 to 1,000 accounts.

A weekend mowing job and a love to work outdoors started Art Scheutzler on a 17-year career.

He is the owner of Farmington Landscape Service and Supply, West Bloomfield, which has 200 to 250 accounts. About 70 percent of his accounts are residential.

He says he likes the work because he makes a good living and gets outdoors. His services include: lawn cutting, park cutting, gardening, shrub trimming, fertilizing, lawn spraying, weed control, dethatching, leaf clean-up, snow removal, landscape construction and vacant lot clearing.

Bob Brown



Jim Brown



Art Brown



Art Scheutzler



**Average price for
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For existing homes, the average purchase price declined to \$47,200 from January's revised \$50,600, but was ahead of the year-earlier \$45,900.

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MEETING DATES

Associated Landscape Contractors of America Maintenance Symposium, San Jose Hyatt House, Nov. 29-Dec. 1, "Chemical Day," Nov. 30. Contact: Joe Marsh, Environmental Industries, Inc., 825 Mabury Rd., San Jose, Calif. 95156. (408) 288-9770.

the axle? If so, it probably won't offer the kind of positive handling or durability you may want.

Is there a heavy-duty front axle that pivots? On some lawn tractors, the front axle may be made of ordinary channel iron or rod. And it may be attached to the frame at more than one point. Sounds okay until one wheel drops into an unseen hole and puts heavy stress on the frame. Serious stress may even cause misalignment of the engine and drive train.

Welded steel frames provide strength and rigidity. Some lawn tractors are built around light gauge stamped steel frames that may bend or flex on rough terrain. A welded steel frame

Hydrostatic transmissions help control machine forward and reverse movement without a lot of shifting and clutching.

reduces flex and distortion to cradle the engine, transmission and drive train components.

Take a good look at the drawbar. Is it beefy? Strong enough to pull your attachments through thick underbrush or soggy topsoil? It should be.

What about body and fenders? Are they made of fiberglass? Synthetic materials? Light gauge metal? Or heavy gauge steel?

Examine the step plates. Are they big enough to let you get a good firm footing when you climb up to the driver's seat?

In-line drive gets more power to the work. It won't do you a lot of good to have a big horsepower tractor if that power isn't transmitted to the gearbox. And that can occur on some brands that transmit power via a tangle of twisting, turning belts. Simply stated, each twist reduces efficiency.

Hydrostatic transmissions should make a tractor operate easier. A lot of tractor manufacturers offer hydrostatic transmissions to help you control machine forward and reverse movement without a lot of shifting and clutching. But some makes are still tough to operate. For example, to stop the movement of one manufacturer's tractor equipped with hydrostatic transmission, you must move a lever and then apply a brake. That takes a lot of eye, hand and foot coordination. Especially if you need to stop quickly.

Is there a dual range transaxle? Some tractors come with a single speed transaxle. Other brands offer a dual range transaxle providing a much broader infinite speed range for work or transport. Choose high range for speed; low range for power.

Is a Category "O" hitch important? Some manufacturers provide a hitch that can be used

only with their attachments. Others offer an A.S.A.E. Category "O" three-point hitch. That means it can be used with any Category "O" pull-behind implement.

Will comfort vanish after an hour on the job? Does the seat move forward or back to accommodate your personal needs? Are instruments, levers, and controls easy to see and use? Your ride should be an easy one if the seat is padded and adjustable.

What about safety? Most manufacturers are concerned with your safety as well as your personal comfort. Many offer safety switches that prevent engine start-up unless both the mower and the drive train are disengaged and there is some-

one in the driver's seat. Many also offer an engine cut-off switch that stops the engine when the driver leaves the seat.

Things to look for in a quality mower. If you turn most lawn tractor mowing units upside down, you'll probably find three cutting blades arranged in a triangular configuration. One blade in front, followed by two others on the left and right. This configuration can cause "streaking" — strips of grass left uncut by many triangular-shaped mowers when making turns.

Other units have all the blades "in-line," or side-by-side. This can allow for a shorter mower front-to-back, and because it is shorter, it follows ground contours to help

eliminate scalping.

Is it easy to lift and lower the mower? How do you raise and lower the mower (and other implements) on bigger tractors? Some units offer hydraulic implement lift controls, which make it easy to lift and lower the mower or other implements with fingertip control.

Other points to watch out for include: The starter? Do you need front power take-off? Can implements run simultaneously yet independently? Do you prefer a side- or rear-discharge mower? Is changing attachments easy?

For information on how to obtain further information on this subject, check the Products section of this issue.

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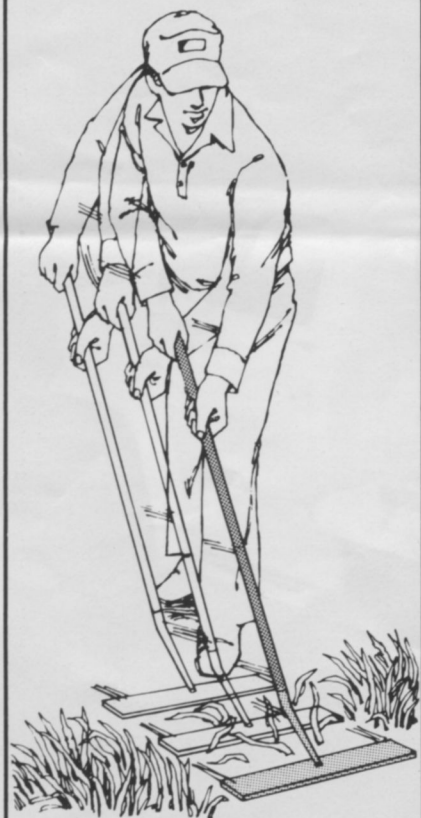
PRODUCTS

Rockland publishes fertilizer data sheet

Rockland Chemical Co., Inc. has published a data sheet outlining availability of its professional turf fertilizers and fertilizer/pesticide combinations. The data sheet also explains the company's Twin-Win fertilizer, which contains two popular forms of water-insoluble nitrogen — IBDU, manufactured by Swift Agricultural Chemicals Corp., and Nitroform, manufactured by Hercules, Inc.

Circle 201 on free information card

BRANNIN'S VEGETENDER® a simple Sliding Motion is all it takes to cut weeds!



Vegetender cuts weeds below ground level under any kind of mulch!

REPORT FROM ATLANTA: Grounds Maintenance Magazine January-1978

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Circle 115 on free information card

A new approach to applying herbicides

A portable herbicide sprayer — the HERBI — has been introduced to the turf market by PBI/Gordon Corp. It is designed



to help the lawn care businessmen utilize herbicides efficiently. The unit's concept is based on ultra low volume controlled droplet application, which conserves water and chemicals and allows precise control of the spray pattern. The new sprayer permits a walking operator to apply an ultra low volume spray of uniform 250-micron droplets exactly on target, low to the ground, with little drift and greater penetration. Ideal for smaller problem areas and those inaccessible to cumbersome equipment, the unit gives a controllable four-foot, clean-cut swath — close to trees and shrubbery — and gives excellent control in wind. Uniform droplet size is maintained by an atomizer in the spray head, powered by eight D-cell batteries that last for 100 hours of operation. Three nozzles permit the use of different solutions, emulsions and — with a proper additive — wettable powders. Fully self-contained, the Herbi weighs only 12 pounds loaded and treats 33,000 square feet or more at normal walking speed. The tank holds five pints. The sprayer is recommended for

applying special herbicides in areas such as lawns, cemeteries, landscaped grounds of commercial buildings, parks and other problem areas in turf having weed infestations not general for the area.

Circle 202 on free information card

Dust control in hydroseeded area

Witco Chemical Corp. has published a detailed brochure on

its Coherex dust retardant, which has uses in hydroseeding. The company said the dilution and application rate will vary according to type of soil and objective. A 1:4 blend is used in most cases, with the application rates varying from one quarter to one gallon per square yard. For hydroseeding, the seeds are mixed with the dilution, and sprayed over the area at a rate of approximately one-half gallon per square yard.

Circle 203 on free information card

COST CUTTINGS

Depreciation ranges for equipment

The federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) position on useful depreciation lives is set forth in its "asset depreciation system" (ADR). Most lawn care firms will want to use depreciation lives within these IRS rules to cut their tax costs, unless they are prepared to justify a different life on the basis of unique facts and circumstances.

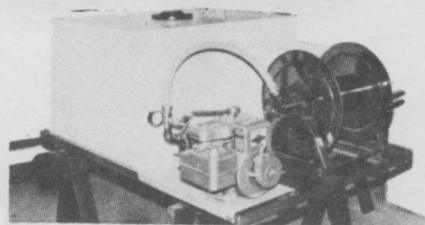
The concept of the ADR system, the American Association of Nurserymen reports, is that the IRS will not question depreciation lives within a range, published by the IRS on an industry-by-industry basis. The ADR system deals first with types of equipment used in all industries. It then prescribes an overall range which may be used for all other types of equipment used in a given industry. For most types, this includes a "repair allowance" expressed as a percentage of cost. This represents a ceiling on annual repair costs if this allowance is elected, with any excess repair costs being capitalized.

For example, for automobiles used in a business, the ADR is between 2½ and 3½ years, with an annual repair allowance of 16.5 percent of cost. For light trucks (under 13,000 pounds unladen weight), the ADR is between three and five years, with an annual repair allowance of 16.5 percent of cost.

For heavy trucks, the ADR is between five and seven years with annual repair allowance of 10 percent. For office furniture and furnishings, the ADR is between eight and 12 years with an annual repair allowance of two percent. For office equipment, the ADR is between five and seven years with an annual repair allowance of 15 percent.

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PRODUCTS

Turf care equipment brochure from Ryan

A free 12-page color brochure explaining in detail its line of turf care equipment is now available from Ryan. Units featured include the company's core processor; Levellawn combination core rake and topdressing leveler; Ren-O-Thin power rakes; sod cutters; and Tote Trailer designed specifically to transport the company's Jr. Sod Cutter.

Circle 204 on free information card

Level cutting on bumpy terrain

The 832R, an eight-horsepower, front-engine rider with a 32-inch cutting width, has all the key components of Toro Co.'s more expensive premium front-engine riders, yet carries a suggested price of less than \$1,000. The



company is offering a choice of two bagging attachments for the unit — the Easy-Empty catcher introduced last year; and the new "Easy Fill" bagging attachment which fills two standard-size 30 gallon plastic trash bags. Or, if the customer prefers, two nylon bags. Other features include: heavy-duty, five-speed, in-line transaxle, for longer, trouble-free product life; friction plate traction clutch, for extended traction belt life and smoother start-up and operation; and free-floating deck suspension for level cutting, even on bumpy terrain.

Circle 205 on free information card

Lawn care programs outlined in booklet

Hercules, Inc. has published "Lawns Stay Greener Longer", a booklet which outlines professional lawn care programs based on annual needs of various turfgrasses in each climate throughout the country. The company said that the comprehensive, educational booklet is designed to provide pro-

MARKETING IDEA FILE

Should you accept credit cards?

Should a lawn care businessman offer the availability and accept credit cards for payment of services performed? Rick Jesse, owner of Perma-Green, Chesterland, Ohio thinks so.

Jesse views this as part of the marketing of his business. He announces on much of his literature that any of the major credit cards such as MasterCard or BankAmericard will be accepted, and also mentions to his customers at the time of application.

"People expect this kind of convenience now, and have grown accustomed to it by using credit cards for other services they receive," he recently told LAWN CARE INDUSTRY.

The American Association of Nurserymen has reported a problem one of its members encountered with a participating bank in a bank credit card program, that could have parallels in the lawn care industry. In this case, a nursery accepted his customer's bank credit card as payment in advance for a special order. The customer later cancelled the order.

Subsequently, and without waiting to hear the nurserymen's side of the story, the customer's bank charged back the full amount of the purchase. Efforts by the nurseryman to resolve the dispute through his own bank were unsuccessful.

One reason that Jesse has offered availability of payment through credit card is that he collects payment from his customers on the spot right after his lawn care application is complete. Often, customers do not have cash readily available, and he has found that they will use their credit card. If nobody is home, he of course bills the customer.

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Circle 102 on free information card



fessional lawn care operators with information and guidelines on the use of "Nitroform" slow-release nitrogen. Recognizing the growth potential for professional lawn services, the company offers "Powder Blue" nitrogen for spray systems; and "Blue Chip" nitrogen for dry applications. Both the powder and granular forms of Nitroform are slow-release nitrogen sources. They are released by soil bacterial action for slow, dependable feeding. When temperatures are too high or too low for grass to grow, soil bacteria are dormant, assuring that Nitroform will be released only when nitrogen is needed to keep lawns and shrubs healthy, the company said. The booklet contains suggested rates and procedures for liquid and dry application systems, and includes tables that are helpful in determining the annual nitrogen requirements for four different growing zones.

Circle 206 on free information card

Booklet tells how to choose lawn tractor

Lawn tractors differ considerably in size, price, utility features, quality, comfort and dependability. How does a lawn care businessman choose a new lawn tractor intelligently? What do you look for? How do you compare one brand against another? To help the lawn care businessman make the right decision, Massey-Ferguson has prepared a new booklet entitled "Lawn and Garden Tractors — How To Get The Most For Your Money".

Circle 207 on free information card

Snowco offers the all around utility trailer line



Model 20-005 with standard wheel covers



Model 20-002 with standard hub caps

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Three trailers with ramps; two with perforated steel decks, one with wooden deck. Capacities 1,150 and 2,100 pounds.

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PRODUCTS

Two-wheel tractors are convertible

Gravely has introduced its new two-wheel convertible tractors. The units offer such features as: all-gear, two- and four-speed transmissions with instant forward/reverse in any gear; cast iron transmission housings; precision bearings; all-gear drive from engine through transmission to attachments — no belts; two-wheel, walk or rise maneuverability; low center of gravity; all tractor controls at operator's position; and four-cycle cast iron engines with engine choices of eight, 10 or 12



horsepower. With over 20 attachments, the tractors power mowers for fine lawn mowing and trimming, as well as rough mowing, snow removal, plowing, light grading and hauling.

Circle 208 on free information card

30-inch Turf Tender

A new 30-inch Turf Tender to apply granular fertilizers, pesticides, seed, or sand joins the Gandy Co. line of turf applicators. The rugged, all-metal, push-handle 30-inch model fea-

tures a snap off stainless steel hopper bottom and rate control slide. Bottom and slide are micro-precision mated at the factory for uniform openings and uniform application at all gauge settings. Set the cam gauge from



the rate chart provided, open the rate control slide with the handle-mounted control lever, and apply. The hopper has an approximate 100-pound granular capacity. Two tri-bar rotors distribute materials evenly to all openings. The 12-inch molded wheels have rubber-tired rims. For easy cleaning, the Turf Tender disassembles without tools. Unsnap the hopper bottom, loosen the end wing nuts and all parts can be quickly wiped clean.

Circle 209 on free information card

Kubota introduces new diesel tractor

Kubota Tractor Corp. introduces a new model tractor, the L295DT, which offers four-wheel drive, along with 30 horsepower, three-cylinder, water-cooled diesel engine as standard features. This



new tractor was built to be used for regular commercial landscaping and offers additional standard features such as eight forward speeds, front and rear power take-off, constant mesh gears for easy shifting, power hydraulic lift with convenient position, auxiliary hydraulic tap, differential lock for extra traction when it is needed, and independent wet disc brakes that resist wear.

Circle 210 on free information card

MONEYWISE

Franchisees told of pitfalls

Persons who enter business by the franchise route have a better chance of survival than the average small businessman. But those contemplating a franchise should look carefully before they sign.

That is the warning from two franchising experts who teach college and hold franchising seminars around the country. Many lawn care businesses are franchise operations, such as Lawn-a-Mat Chemical & Equipment Corp., Mineola, N.Y.; Lawn Doctor, Wickatunk, N.J.; Lawn King, Fairfield, N.J.; Lawn Medic, Rochester, N.Y.; and A-Perm-o-Green Lawn, Inc., Austin, Texas, among many others.

Alfred J. Modica and David Seltz urge those interested in owning a franchise to examine the record of the franchisor and interview several persons it has already franchised. "Ask for a list of franchisees," says Modica, who teaches at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., "and select some at random to visit on your own."

Successful franchisors have well-developed and effective marketing and training programs, Modica said. He advised potential franchisees to meet the firm's marketing and training people before they sign a contract. "These firms have management, technical and training manuals that give details of the standard operating procedure of the firm. Don't sign up on the spur of the moment. Get competent legal counsel to look over the contract before you sign."

Potential franchisees, he said, should stay away from "own-your-own-business" shows, and should watch out for fad businesses and pyramid schemes. "Look at the firm's financial statements and see where it is deriving its income," he said. If the income comes mainly from the sale of franchises and not from its products or services, that is a tipoff that a pyramid scheme is involved.

Many businesses fail because they are undercapitalized, Modica said. A beginning franchisee should have personal funds to sustain him for at least six months in business in addition to the franchising fee he pays initially.

Lawn care franchises range from \$7,000 to \$25,000, and some above and below those figures. Modica warns that at least 50 percent of the total investment should be the franchisee's own money. Persons who go into business for themselves are making an investment and should know how to evaluate that investment properly.

"You shouldn't just be buying a job," Modica said. "Your return on investment should be at least 11 percent." Other vital factors in the success of an enterprise are location and kind of patronage expected. "You should have a business where the customer keeps coming back — not just a one-time sale," he said.

But someone who takes the time and effort to investigate before leaping into a franchise has a greater chance at success than most new businessmen. Modica said about 94 percent of new small businesses fail within the first two years. The rate of franchises failing is only about six to eight percent, he noted.

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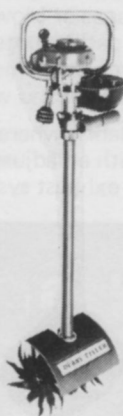
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American made, gasoline powered, work tested for 10 years by truck farmers, nurserymen and gardeners.

Derby Tiller-Power Hoe aerates or thatches 20 x 40 ft. section in five minutes or less. Has precise depth control, weeds 1 to 3 inches deep. High speed tines break ground for planting, tills 6 to 8 inches deep, power churns soil into finely granulated loam . . . Tills 9 inches wide.

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Circle 114 on free information card

PRODUCTS

500-gallon spray tank brochure is available

A free illustrated brochure is available on new 300-, 400- or 500-gallon spray tanks manufactured by Ag-Chem Equipment Co., Inc. The 300-gallon tank is polymer, the 400-gallon

tank is either polymer or stainless steel and the 500-gallon tank is stainless steel. All tanks feature large fill holes, anti-splash lids and full length stainless steel sparger for "bottom sweep" agitation of chemicals. Large gathering sump assures complete emptying of valuable chemicals. Polymer tanks have a two-year guarantee and resist punctures and cracking.

Circle 211 on free information card

Information published on soil fumigants

Great Lakes Chemical Corp. has published data sheets on its Bromo-O-Gas, a multi-purpose soil fumigant for use on lawns, nurseries and ornamental nurseries. It is effective in controlling nematodes, soilborne diseases and various weed seeds.

Circle 212 on free information card

1,600-2,000 gallon spray tanks available

Raven Industries, Inc. is now manufacturing a new line of 1,600 to 2,000 gallon applicator, nurse and storage tanks. The tanks are constructed of fiberglass for maximum chemical and corrosion resistance. Fittings and accessories are also available.

Circle 213 on free information card

NEXT MONTH



Vargas



Bredeson



Weaver



Hillman

The May issue of **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY** will feature ... Dr. Joe Vargas of Michigan State University on turf disease identification; Joe Bredeson of Swift Agricultural Chemicals Co. on the growth of the lawn care industry; Gary Weaver and Gary Hillman of Turf Gard Co., Troy,

Ohio explaining the problems they went through establishing their two-year-old lawn care business; a profile of the lawn care market in Los Angeles and much, much more. The June issue will feature Cleveland in Marketplace, and the July issue will feature Denver.

THE NEW Winro BL-81 Blower FROM BILLY GOAT™

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Our new BL-81 Blower handles like a breeze. We've made sure of that by giving it Zedron® pneumatic rear tires, steel front wheels, an easy-grip handle throttle and a compact, fold-down handle.

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8 HP Model BL-81

- 8 HP Briggs & Stratton, ball-bearing 4-cycle gas engine
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Circle 107 on free information card

TOOLS, TIPS & TECHNIQUES

How much nitrogen?

The amount of nitrogen needed annually depends on the grass, on the rainfall and/or irrigation and on the growing season. Agronomists for Hercules, Inc., Wilmington, Del., have put together a compilation of suggested annual nitrogen rates for various grasses and regions.

Zone I consists of areas of the country where the growing season is the longest. This would be Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, Arizona; the southern tips of South Carolina and California; the southern halves of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi and Texas.

In this area, bermudagrass, St. Augustinegrass, zoysia, bahiagrass, centipedegrass and ryegrass are recommended to receive between two and 16 pounds of nitrogen per thousand square feet a year. Hybrid bermudagrass and dichondra receives between six and 20 pounds of nitrogen per thousand square feet.

For Zone II, which is comprised of the middle states or temperate zones, common bluegrass varieties are recommended to receive about three to five pounds of nitrogen, improved bluegrass cultivars between four and eight pounds of nitrogen, common and improved fescues between two and four pounds of nitrogen, and improved perennial ryegrasses between four and five pounds of nitrogen.

In the Midwest and Great Lakes region (Zone III), common bluegrass varieties are recommended to receive between two and three pounds of nitrogen, improved bluegrass cultivars between four and six pounds of nitrogen, common and improved fescues between two and four pounds of nitrogen, improved perennial ryegrasses between three and four pounds of nitrogen and bentgrasses between six and 10 pounds of nitrogen.

In the northern border states and Canada (Zone IV), common bluegrass varieties are recommended to receive between two and three pounds of nitrogen, improved bluegrass cultivars between four and six pounds of nitrogen, common and improved fescues between two and four pounds of nitrogen, improved perennial ryegrasses between two and three pounds of nitrogen and bentgrasses between six and eight pounds of nitrogen.

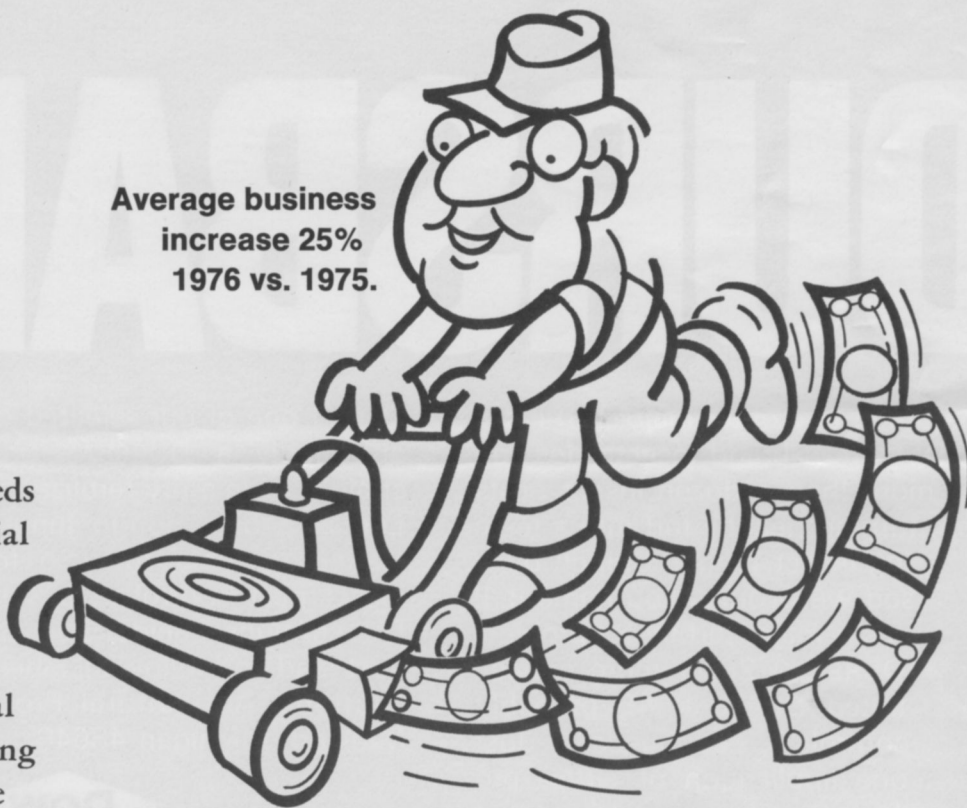
Middle states would include the northern halves of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona; all of North Carolina, Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee; mid-California; and the southern halves of New Jersey, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Utah and Nevada.

States in the Midwest region would include Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming and Oregon; the southern portions of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Montana and Idaho; and the northern portions of New Jersey, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Utah, Nevada and California.

Zone IV would include northern portions of Maine, Vermont, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Montana and Idaho; all of North Dakota and Washington; and southern Canada. Hercules recommends that lawn care businessmen consult local university or extension turf specialists when in doubt. Copies of this information have been made available through the Products section of this issue of **LAWN CARE INDUSTRY**.

Let's get down to grass facts!

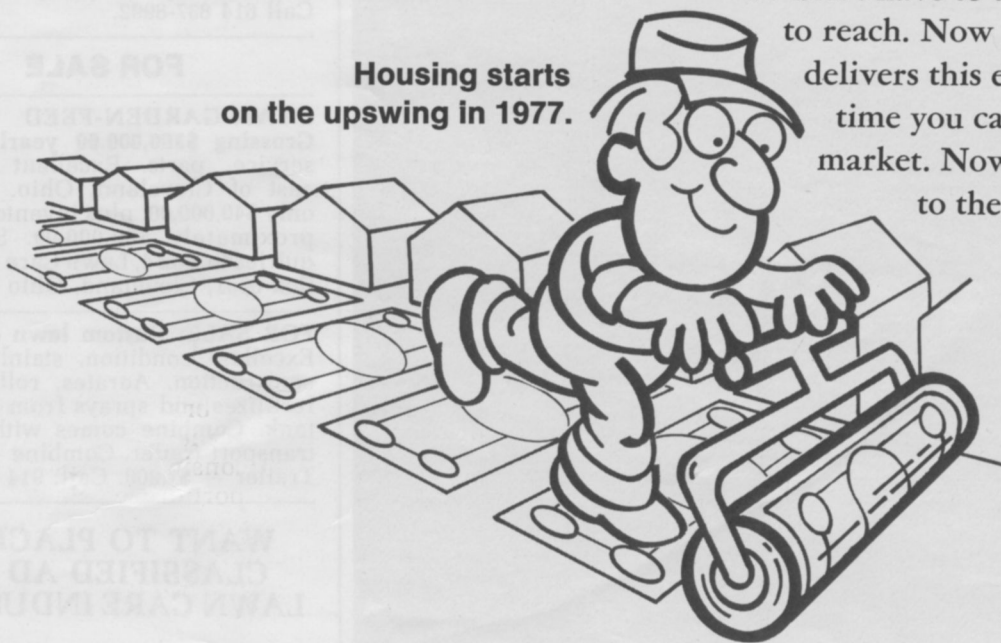
Average business
increase 25%
1976 vs. 1975.



More than 8,000 businesses have emerged — almost over night — to serve the wants and needs of the 45 million home owners in the residential turf and ornamental market. Last year these businesses served over 4 million accounts, produced \$1.25 billion in receipts and a 25% growth. These facts make it clear that chemical lawn care and maintenance services are booming businesses today... and have just scratched the surface of the huge residential market. If you've been trying to sell this emerging service industry,

we don't have to tell you how difficult it's been to reach. Now at last there is a magazine that delivers this exclusive audience. Now for the first time you can communicate with this growth market. Now you can match your message to the market.

Housing starts
on the upswing in 1977.



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lawn care...the growingest market.

BEHIND THIS ISSUE



No matter where we go, we get requests from lawn care businessmen who want to know when the next turf conference, business meeting or seminar is being held in their area. You will notice that on page 14 of this issue, we have introduced an expanded Meeting Dates section to keep our readers up on what is happening in the way of educational meetings for the lawn care industry. In addition, the smart companies in the industry like Lofts Pedigreed Seed, Hercules, Northrup King, Swift, O.M. Scott & Sons, Finn Equipment and many, many others are putting on their own individual seminars for lawn care businessmen and other turf professionals around the country. Even though we have expanded our Meeting Dates section, we often can't print all that is going on. If you have a question about what is coming to your area, just give us a call and we'll put you in touch with the right people.

Bob Earley

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For less money than any other major turf insecticide, DURSBAN® brand insecticides can keep more than a dozen insect pests from turning healthy turf into a teeming insect jungle. Chinch bugs, sod webworms, you name it. If it's a major turf insect problem, DURSBAN 2E or more concentrated DURSBAN 4E probably controls it. Economically. Just one application of either product provides several weeks of effective residual insect control. Simply mix with water and spray.

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When answering ads where box number only is given, please address as follows: Box number, c/o LAWN CARE INDUSTRY, Dorothy Lowe, Box 6951, Cleveland, Ohio 44101.

Rates: 35¢ a word for line ads, 65¢ a word for display ads. Box numbers add \$1 for mailing. All classified ads must be received by the publisher before the 10th of the month preceding publication and be accompanied by cash or money order covering full payment.

Mail ad copy to Dorothy Lowe, LAWN CARE INDUSTRY, Box 6951, Cleveland, Ohio 44101.

HELP WANTED

LANDSCAPE — LAWN CARE. Estimator—salesman. Opportunity for advancement with established firm offering landscape and turf care services. Salary and liberal fringes. Experience in direct selling and job cost estimating essential. Send resume to: Jeff Kahnke, Vice President, Tree Service, Inc., 6000 West 78th Street, Edina, Minnesota 55435.

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FOR SALE: 1976 GMC 1½ ton spray truck w/1000 gallon tank, Meyers multistage pump, hose, and hose reel. This truck with only 13,000 miles on it is in excellent condition and ready to spray! For details call 217 529-5692.

1977 1 TON SPRAY TRUCK, 700 gallon bean piston pump, 7000 miles. Call 614 837-8992.

FOR SALE

LAWN-GARDEN-FEED STORE. Grossing \$300,000.00 yearly. Sales, service, parts. Excellent location, east of Cleveland, Ohio. Business only \$40,000.00, plus inventory of approximately \$60,000.00. Send inquiries to Box 4, Lawn Care Industry, Box 6951, Cleveland, Ohio 44101.

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