



JACK VAN FOSSEN

ChemLawn leader views the future, his company—and his competitors

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LAST WORD

On human laziness...

PAGE 34

AN **HBJ** PUBLICATION

JUNE 1985

Volume 9, Number 6 \$2.00

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Serving lawn maintenance and chemical lawn care professionals

State of the Industry

Chemical applicators help industry hit new heights



For the first time in the history of the industry, gross revenues of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY readers who do chemical lawn care have surpassed those of readers who perform landscape maintenance, according to the magazine's 1985 "State of the Industry" survey.

In 1984, the survey reveals, our readers' receipts from chemical lawn care were \$1.50 billion, compared to \$1.30 billion from landscape maintenance accounts. Those figures represent

growth of 40.2 and 11.1 percent, respectively, over 1983 figures.

Taken as a whole, LCI's readership grossed \$2.81 billion in 1984, a growth of 26.6 percent over 1983's figure of \$2.22 billion.

This "State of the Industry" survey was the most ambitious ever attempted as 1,500 questionnaires were distributed to the magazine's readership. Three-hundred and eighty were returned, a response rate of 27.5 percent. In addition, for the first time ever, the survey results were regionalized.

Not surprisingly, the survey found that the vast majority of chemical lawn care readers are centered in the East North Central region (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin). Lawn care companies owned by LCI readers in those states grossed an average of \$908,938. The overall industry average for the East North Central region led the nation with the average company grossing \$415,338 in 1984.

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Next month:

Heat stress on turf



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Circle No. 103 on Reader Inquiry Card

5001

INDUSTRY NEWS

PBI-Gordon to fund MCPP re-registration?

As re-registration for the turf herbicide mecoprop (MCPP) approaches, PBI-Gordon appears ready to foot the bill.

"We (PBI-Gordon) are basically in the middle of this," notes J.S. "Skip" Skaptason, a PBI-Gordon vice-president. "We've known it was coming for 10 years."

The company is doing work on a multi-million dollar data base for MCPP. "It's not inexpensive," Skaptason says, "but much of it the money for data has already been spent. This is a problem we've been working on for a long time."

"MCPP is the most important herbicide in turf."

The process MCPP will be going through for re-registration is similar to the passage of 2,4-D, which cost about \$3 million.

MCPP is used on sports and ornamental turf for selective control of surface-creeping broadleaf weeds such as red and white clovers, chickweed, knotweed, plantain, dandelion and ground ivy.



Skaptason

All companies which have MCPP registrations will get notice from the EPA.

"This one looks like it may be a very, very expensive call-in," says Ray Russell of Dow Chemical, which also has an MCPP registration. Russell's guess is \$4 million to \$7 million.

"It just doesn't look like the product is worth the expense," Russell continues. "Dow will not

assist in financing the call-in. We have determined that it is not something we can afford to do."

Russell notes that the EPA already has a lot of data on the product stored away.

The re-registration will involve two data call-ins, according to Skaptason. One relates to groundwater. "We and people that we work with think we have all the information to answer that problem," he says. The second is the actual re-registration.

Other companies which use MCPP include W.A. Cleary, SDS Biotech and Rhone-Poulenc.

New York abandons gypsy moth

In a decision which evolved over several years, the state of New York has decided to drop its program to control gypsy moths, according to an article in the *New York Times*. The move places the responsibility on communities and private enterprise.

Michael Birmingham, gypsy moth expert for the N.Y. Department of Environmental Conservation, cited several reasons for the decision in the *Times* article, but "the single most impor-

tant reason was the difficulty the state had in getting a consensus on spraying with the various towns, counties and private landowners."

Another reason for the decision was a cut in pest control personnel.

The state will continue to have some involvement, certifying pesticides and applicators and offering technical advice, the article says, "but it will not conduct surveys, spend money on the pro-

gram, or act as a transfer agent of funds from Washington."

The gypsy moth population and the damage it causes has declined in the Northeast, but the insect is still a major pest in some areas. In 1981, the peak year of the gypsy moth, 13 million acres of trees suffered extensive damage. Less than a million acres were damaged last year.

The last active spraying program in New York, which cost \$1 million, was in 1982.

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY (USPS 397250) is published monthly by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publications. Corporate and Editorial offices: 7500 Old Oak Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44130. Advertising Offices: 757 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017. 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60601 and 3091 Maple Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30305. Accounting, Advertising Production and Circulation offices: 1 East First Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802. Subscription rates: \$20 per year in the United States; \$25 per year in Canada. All other countries: \$50 per year. Single copies (pre-paid only): \$2 in the U.S.; elsewhere \$4.50; add \$3.00 for shipping and handling per order. Second class postage paid at Duluth, Minnesota 55806. Copyright © 1985 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

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MEMOS

THE CRIES heard one or two years ago about the proliferation of unethical competitors in the industry seem to have died down. According to this month's "State of the Industry" survey, unethical competitors were rated as a major concern by just 39 percent of the respondents, seventh on a list of 11 concerns. Insurance costs were ranked as the top major concern, and rightfully so: one national business report has commercial liability premiums skyrocketing by as much as 30 percent this year—probably more among businesses dealing with toxic substances.

OTHER CONCERNS might be the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, which re-defines hazardous waste generators, and groundwater contamination. **John Latting** of Bulkem Corp. says that on Aug. 7 when the new RCRA rules go into effect, "we can look for all hell to break loose." And Dow Chemical's **Ray Russell** says that "groundwater contamination is going to be an ugly issue." See details on RCRA in next month's LCI, and the groundwater contamination issue later this year.

O.M. SCOTT has finally recognized professional lawn care as a viable market with the formation of a new division headed by **Ron Gagne**. "Our schedule calls for us to be 100 percent ready to serve the industry by Oct. 1st," Gagne says. "We'll expand our visibility considerably at the PLCAA convention." Scott's has been a leader in consumer (do-it-yourself) lawn care products, but Gagne says that business is up 72 percent for the company's line of products which serve the LCO.

ARE VENTURE capitalists looking at the lawn care market? Yes, we hear. A group of money people on the East Coast has purchased four lawn care companies with a combined customer

list of 3,000, pared it down to 2,000 profitable customers, kept the best personnel, and are operating the company this year at a profit. We will probably be seeing more of this in the future, our sources say.

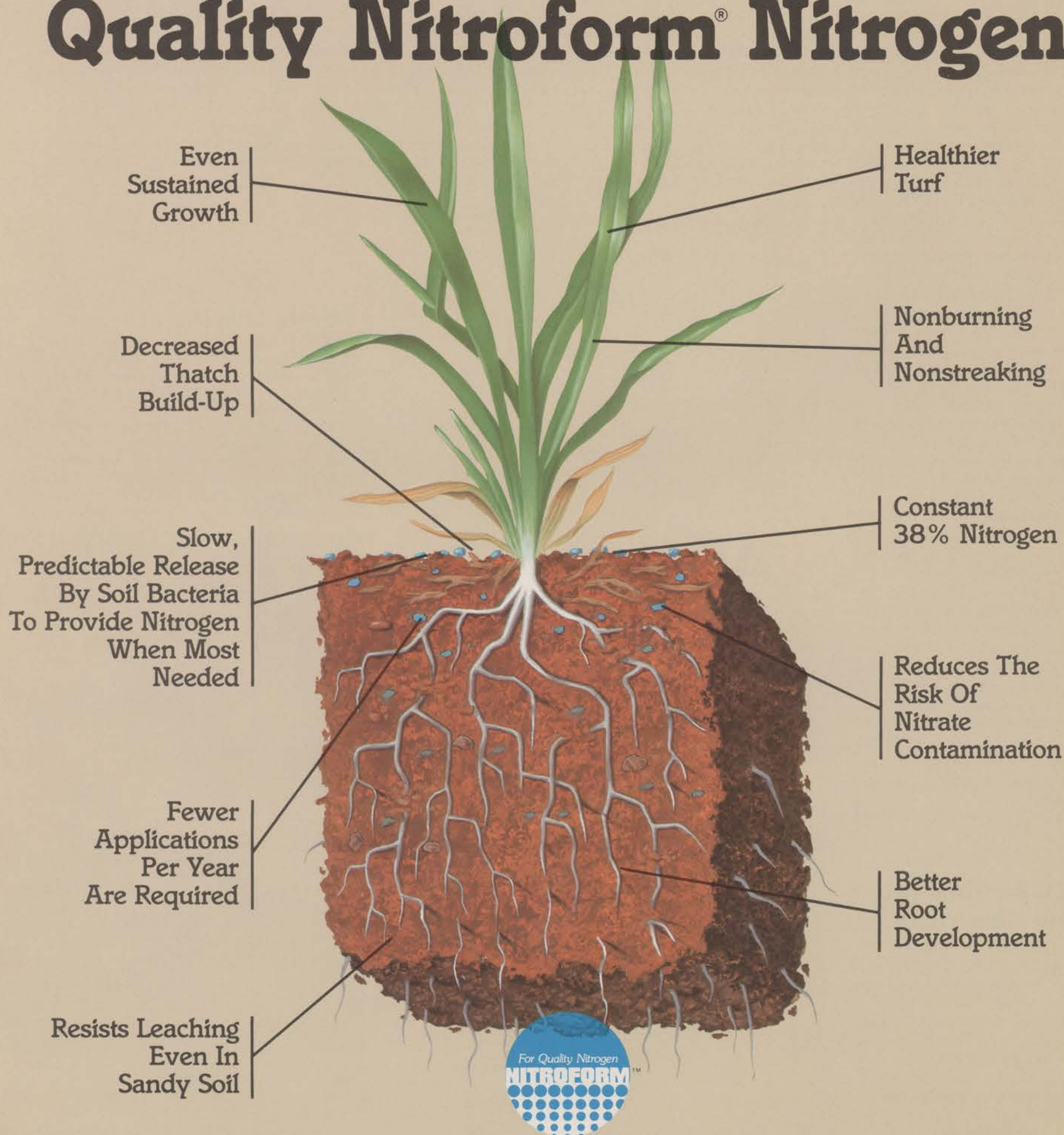
CHEMLAWN STOCK is back up over \$31 per share, exactly where it started its drop last fall. Analysts and brokers apparently are now pleased with the company's promise for the future.

A SURVEY done by the Professional Lawn Care Credit Association of America shows that eight of nine PLCCAA members find their membership valuable. More than one in two rank it most or second-most important in collecting accounts receivable. Five of nine found an increase in efficiency stemming from their dealings with the PLCCAA, which is handled by executive director **L. James Martin** of Kent, Ohio.

THREE CHEMICALS are new to the lawn care industry: Imidan insecticide in a liquid formulation, Subdue 5G fungicide and Mocap 10G nematocide. Imidan 1.E is for insect infestations of shade and flowering trees, shrubs, evergreens and roses. Subdue controls pythium blight, pythium damping-off and yellow tuft in bluegrass; and downy mildew in St. Augustinegrass. Mocap can be used on established home lawns of bahia, bermuda, centipede, fescue, Kentucky blue, St. Augustine and zoysia grasses for control of nematodes.

IN ADDITION, you can expect to see an amine formulation of Turflon herbicide announced at November's PLCAA convention and trade show, say the people at Dow Chemical Co. However, the amine formulation also might be sold over the counter to do-it-yourselfers.

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'Right-to-know' to affect business?

In March, the Cleveland, Ohio, City Council passed a right-to-know ordinance regulating the use of hazardous chemicals. Such ordinances could have a wide-ranging effect on the lawn care industry.

"Although not entirely acceptable, the new law is a vast improvement over the bill originally introduced," says Jack A. Licate, manager of government programs for the government affairs division of the Greater Cleveland Growth Association.

The purpose of the bill is to increase employee and public safety by regulating the handling of hazardous chemicals in the workplace. It goes into effect on March 4, 1986 for employers with 51 or more employees, and on March 4, 1987 for employers with 50 employees or fewer.

Lauren Lanphear of Lanphear Supply, Cleveland, says, "I still have some concern about it. I don't think it's perfect. It's more of a precedence-type thing." Lanphear says the worker section of the bill parallels OSHA's right-to-know bill, but the community section is different.

"I'm not really sure this type of thing increases safety for the community," he says.

A great deal of forms are required to be filed with the city and made available to fire departments, and Lanphear isn't sure the ordinance is effective in that requirement. Even small businesses with small quantities of chemicals will have to file, he says. There are many small businesses "that will have to produce a lot of paperwork that isn't needed."

The bill requires employers to

register and pay an annual fee of up to \$500 depending on the size of the workplace, as well as preparing a list of hazardous chemicals handled or stored in the workplace and making it available to employees and the fire department, obtaining a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) from the chemical manufacturer for each hazardous chemical, instituting an employee training program in the use of hazardous chemicals, and providing chemical information to employees or

employee representatives.

Employers with 12 or fewer employees or with an aggregate of 50 gallons or 500 pounds or less of hazardous chemicals are partially exempt from these requirements.

Licate feels the bout with right-to-know has just begun, for just as Cleveland was passing its ordinance, a similar bill was introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives.

"It embodies some of the worst elements that the Cleveland ordinance contained upon its intro-

duction," Licate said.

According to State Representative Jane Campbell, the state bill is modeled after the Cleveland ordinance, and emphasizes worker safety.

As far as passage in the House, Campbell says, "I think it has a real good chance. It certainly will be deeply debated." Campbell added the Senate is "always tougher," but she feels the bill is "a good, solid piece of legislation."

Sixteen states already have right-to-know legislation.

All this and more where the sign says Ford

Ford compact tractors

Ford 1000 Series tractors give you powerful working capacity with compact-size maneuverability for a wide range of mowing, loading and site preparation needs.

There are six models, from 13 to 32 engine horsepower. These hard-working diesels come standard with 540 rpm PTO, 10 or 12-speed transmission, full-time live hydraulics, and a Category I three-point hitch.

Options include front-wheel drive. Hydrostatic or synchronized manual shuttle transmission, depending on model. Creeper speeds. Turf tires, and more. Over 50 matching attachments and implements are available.



Ford commercial mowers

These mowers are designed for grounds maintenance professionals with sunup to sundown work schedules.

Top of the line is a 16-horsepower, 5-forward speed workhorse that cuts a 48-inch swath, with turn-on-a-dime maneuverability for mowing around trees, shrubs and other obstacles. The optional sulky provides sit-down comfort for mowing large lawn and turf areas. A twin-cylinder Briggs & Stratton Industrial/Commercial engine delivers plenty of power to take heavy growth in stride.

For mowing and trimming smaller areas, Ford offers two rear-discharge 21-inch commercial mowers, one self-propelled and one push-type.

ALCA releases new directory

The 1985 "Who's Who in Landscape Contracting," is available from the Associated Landscape Contractors of America.

The annual directory lists the members, with firm name, address, phone number, volume index, specialty work performed, and principal contact(s). Listings are cross-indexed by city, state and individual name.

It is available upon request to landscape contractors, designers and other qualified buyers and specifiers of landscape contracting at no charge. Suppliers may purchase the directory for \$25.

To order, send request along with check, to: ALCA, 405 N. Washington St., Suite 104, Falls Church, VA, 22046; or call (703) 241-4004.

Brain trust

Attending a recent Pesticide Public Policy Foundation meeting were Harvey Gold (left), executive director of the National Pest Control Association, and Jim Brooks, executive director of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America. The two are board members of PPPF, representing two of the largest segments of urban pesticide applicators. PPPF has been actively involved in monitoring pesticide regulatory activity in the country.



OSHA drops eye protection

Citing an overabundant case load, expense and the time required, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) dropped the issue of required eye protection in early April.

"In order to prove the fact that there are problems, they would have to go to a lengthy investigation that the chemicals would cause damage of a significant nature," says Ernie Sampson of Excelawn, Louisville, Ky.

Sampson gave a "fact-finding" presentation before the OSHA board against required eye protection.

"It's not something that we (the PLCAA) feel is necessary," Sampson says, and personally, "I don't feel the danger is immediate."

The three areas that would be required to defend the use of eye protection were too involved, according to Sampson.

"It's a sensitive issue," one LCO says, but "I question whether it is needed for employee safety. There's a place and time for eye protection in the industry. I don't think there's enough exposure on a day-to-day basis."

1,400 attend Reinders show

More than 1,400 people attended Wisconsin's largest turf conference, which was sponsored by Reinders Brothers.

"The educational sessions were awfully well attended," said Ed Devinger of Reinders. "I would say that was the highlight of the show."

The sessions were presented by many well-known specialists in the turfgrass industry, including Dr. Gayle Worf and Dr. Robert Newman from the University of Wisconsin; Dr. Joe Vargas of Michigan State University; Dr. Robert Shearman of University of Nebraska; and Dr. Jerry Pepin from Pickseed West.

The conference exhibited more than a half million dollars of equipment, and provided the opportunity to discuss trends with leading industry representatives.

Correction

April's issue of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY incorrectly listed dates for some regional seminars to be held by the Professional Lawn Care Association. The correct locations and dates are: Atlanta, Ga., July 9; Baltimore, Md., July 11; Paramus, N.J., July 16; Worcester, Mass., July 18; Pittsburgh, Pa., July 23; Rochester, N.Y., July 25; and Cleveland, Ohio, July 29-30.

A corrected list appears this month in "Meeting dates."

Ford mid-range tractors

Ford Series 10 tractors are engineered for excellent performance, ease of operation and all-around versatility.

Choose from ten diesel models from 34.3 to 86 maximum net engine horsepower. Standard equipment includes 3-point hitch, independent PTO, and power-assist steering on most models.

Options include front-wheel drive, synchromesh transmission, turf tires, and more.

Ford also offers 40.5 and 60 maximum net horsepower low-center-of-gravity Series 10 tractors (shown below) designed to work on hilly and rolling terrain.

Industrial tractors

A Ford industrial tractor or tractor-loader may be your best choice for site preparation and other heavy-duty work.

Four diesel models are available from 48 to 60 SAE net horsepower. Tractor-loaders offer up to 4,500 lbs of lift capacity, with single-lever loader control.

Choose from three transmissions—4-speed torque converter, dual-range 8-speed, or manual reversing 6x4.

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Ford tractor-loaders

There's a Ford loader available to extend the versatility and year-around capabilities of every Ford tractor power size. Each offers a wide choice of buckets.

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Ford also offers many other attachments for grounds maintenance work: rotary cutters, flail mowers, front and rear blades, landscape rakes, scoops, posthole diggers and more. See your Ford Tractor dealer for complete information.

Ford compact loaders

Ford Load Handlers pack a lot of muscle into a very compact, highly maneuverable package.

Five models range from the 20-horsepower CL-25 to the 64-horsepower CL-65 that can lift a 2,000-pound load. They're all equipped with diesel engines.

A choice of buckets, options and attachments provides surprising versatility. The list includes pallet forks, dozer blades, utility forks, grapples and more.

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Annual dirtball tricks surfacing?

Randy Smith, co-owner of Valley Lawn Care in Appleton, Wisc., is finding that many lawns are measured shorter by a local franchise operation.

"We are running across it primarily with two companies—both major corporations," says Smith, who in his third year of business. "It always seems to be around 1,000 square feet difference."

A competitor measured a Valley customer's lawn at 9,061 square feet at a cost of \$47.52 per

application, plus tax. Valley measured it at 9,724 square feet, at a cost of \$44.92 with tax.

Smith finds those customers suspicious of his company.

"If your square footage is more, why isn't your price higher?" the customers ask. Smith says it makes Valley look bad because customers think they are not using the proper amount of chemicals, or are shafting the customer elsewhere.

Smith believes that salespeople, working on a percentage of

square footage sold, are responsible.

"We noticed it last year when the phone kept ringing, saying, 'How come your measurements are higher?' People say something's wrong, and they think that we're the cheaters," he says.

The area supports three major companies, one owned by a friend who said he would keep an eye out for similar occurrences.

"If it disappears, fine. If not, I'll call the Professional Lawn Care Association or something," Smith

says. "As far as a lot of the nasty stuff, we haven't run across that at all. It's just been the measurements."

Smith's wife Jan has also seen a great deal of the mismeasuring.

"My guess would be it's prevalent all over," Jan says. "We're the only independent in the area that's of any size, and we're seeing the mismeasurements with the franchises."

Jan suggests getting two companies and an impartial third party together to measure a lawn accurately.

One of the companies is also going to lawns without being requested for evaluation, according to Jan. She says the company is a new one and hopes they will change their tactics after they become established.

One local extension agent asks: "That company is digging itself a grave, but is it taking other lawn care companies with it?"

—Carla Steen

Before you buy any other machine that fertilizes, seeds, coreaerates and spikes, READ THIS AD!

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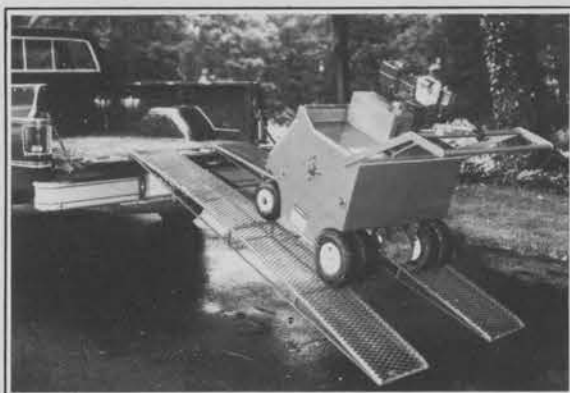
SEED-AIR.

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A ramp is pictured in the photo at left.

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Dyclomec has stronger version

Norasak 10G, a similar but stronger version of PBI-Gordon's Dyclomec 4G, is available under the Acme label. Norasak is a herbicide created for total vegetation control, and is targeted for agricultural, commercial and aquatic use.

"It's used whenever you want total control for a year," says Chuck Eatough of Eatough and Associates.

Eatough describes Norasak as a moisture-activated pre- and post-emergent herbicide. Norasak radiates a vapor barrier through which nothing can germinate. "Any weed that is coming back from dormancy and tries to push through that zone can't get through, (but) any plant that is deeply rooted (such as rose bushes and trees)...it has no effect on at all," Eatough says.

Norasak also allows very little lateral movement, and is especially effective under concrete and asphalt.

Although only recently introduced into the market, Norasak is doing very well. "It's really starting to catch fire," Eatough says.

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LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

JUNE 1985

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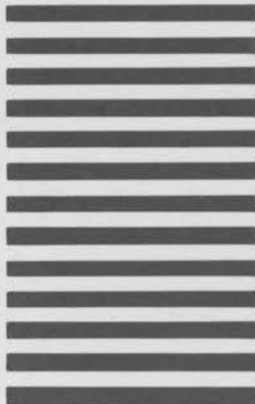
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**GET
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FACTS**

LCI gets two new editors

As LAWN CARE INDUSTRY grows, so grows its staff. LCI has added two editors in the past month, executive editor Bruce Shank and assistant editor Carla Steen.

Shank, formerly executive editor of *Weeds, Trees & Turf*, was instrumental in the start-up of LCI in 1977. He has also edited *Pest Control*. His promotion makes him executive editor of all three HBJ magazines.

"Bruce's hard work and experience in the more than 11 years since he joined the com-



Shank



Steen

pany has prompted the move," said group publisher Bob Earley.

Shank is also handling the program for HBJ's Landscape Expo next March.

In addition, I am delighted to have Carla on board. The Bowling Green State University graduate has a newspaper background. She is already learning the industry—as you can see by reading her column on page 34.

* * * * *

Industry statistics, contained in this month's "State of the Industry" report, are surprising (and, maybe, alarming) in one respect.

Though the chemical lawn care industry is shattering all growth records, it appears from our survey that landscape maintenance is slowing down. It was just 11 percent last year, a long way from the 20 percent of the previous year.

If any of our readers have any ideas why this phenomena began manifesting itself last year, we'd welcome your comments.

* * * * *

Matt Narog of Lawn Clinic, Mountainview, Calif. tells us that his company was inadvertently omitted from our May "Million Dollar Lawn Care Companies" list. After doing about \$750,000 worth of business in 1984, Lawn Clinic joined the elite with \$1.1 million last year.

Narog, incidentally, is eager for more companies to join him and help educate California homeowners as to the value of

chemical lawn care. "We're about 10 or 15 years behind the Midwest, and it'll be another three years or so before it catches on out here," he says.

Part of the reason, of course, is that landscape gardeners retain a stronghold on the upscale California market. The other part of the reason? An average lawn size of 1,500 square feet and very

little flat, open space.

We'll have more about California in later issues.

Jerry Roche

Jerry Roche
Editor



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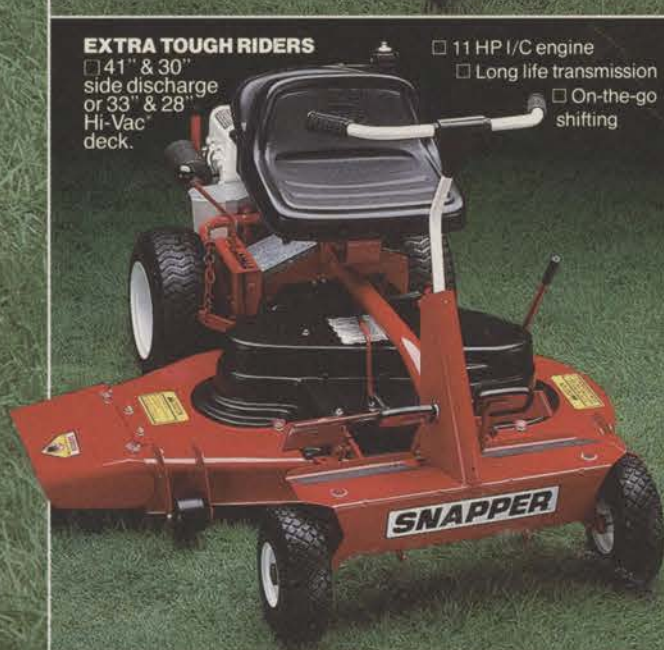
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State of the Industry

ChemLawn's Van Fossen discusses lawn care's past, present, future

LAWN CARE INDUSTRY spent part of a day recently with Jack Van Fossen, president of the ChemLawn Corp., the largest chemical lawn care company in the country.

Van Fossen chatted over a light lunch in the company's cafeteria, occasionally stopping to talk to ChemLawn employees. The session then adjourned to his plush office overlooking a man-made pond on the ChemLawn grounds just outside of Columbus, Ohio.

Van Fossen, a lawyer before being named to his current position in 1972, was candid and honest—not much different than the thousands of LCOs operating other, smaller businesses from coast to coast.

He was asked about the state of the industry, and here are his observations:

LCI: What do you see as being the state of the chemical lawn care industry?

VAN FOSSEN: I don't think it's mature yet. It's going through a logical evolutionary process.

I see a lot of the competitors within the industry becoming more sophisticated about what they do and how they do it.

Generally, most of the companies are run by people who grew up with the lawn care industry. Some of them may have different levels of business experience. Some of them may go outside the lawn care industry in order to bring talents in—particularly in specialty areas like accounting and finance. But the industry generally is pretty much oriented to people who have had some kind of contact with the green industry.

Many competitors are becoming more conscious of the image they portray. Unfortunately, that's not true of the industry as a whole, and there's still a lot of people who—for fairly obvious reasons—take short cuts and don't necessarily follow the kind of practices that other people in the industry would like them to follow.

LCI: Why did the ChemLawn/lawn care concept catch on so very fast?

VAN FOSSEN: A lot of people talk about keeping up with the Joneses, but the answer to that question is obvious. A lot of people who would normally fertilize their lawns skip it because of the hassle, even though people normally like to have an attractive lawn. What ChemLawn brought was a system to give the customer

that at a reasonable price.

LCI: As dominant as ChemLawn is, do you see it having a role in the overall picture of the industry? And, if so, what is the role?

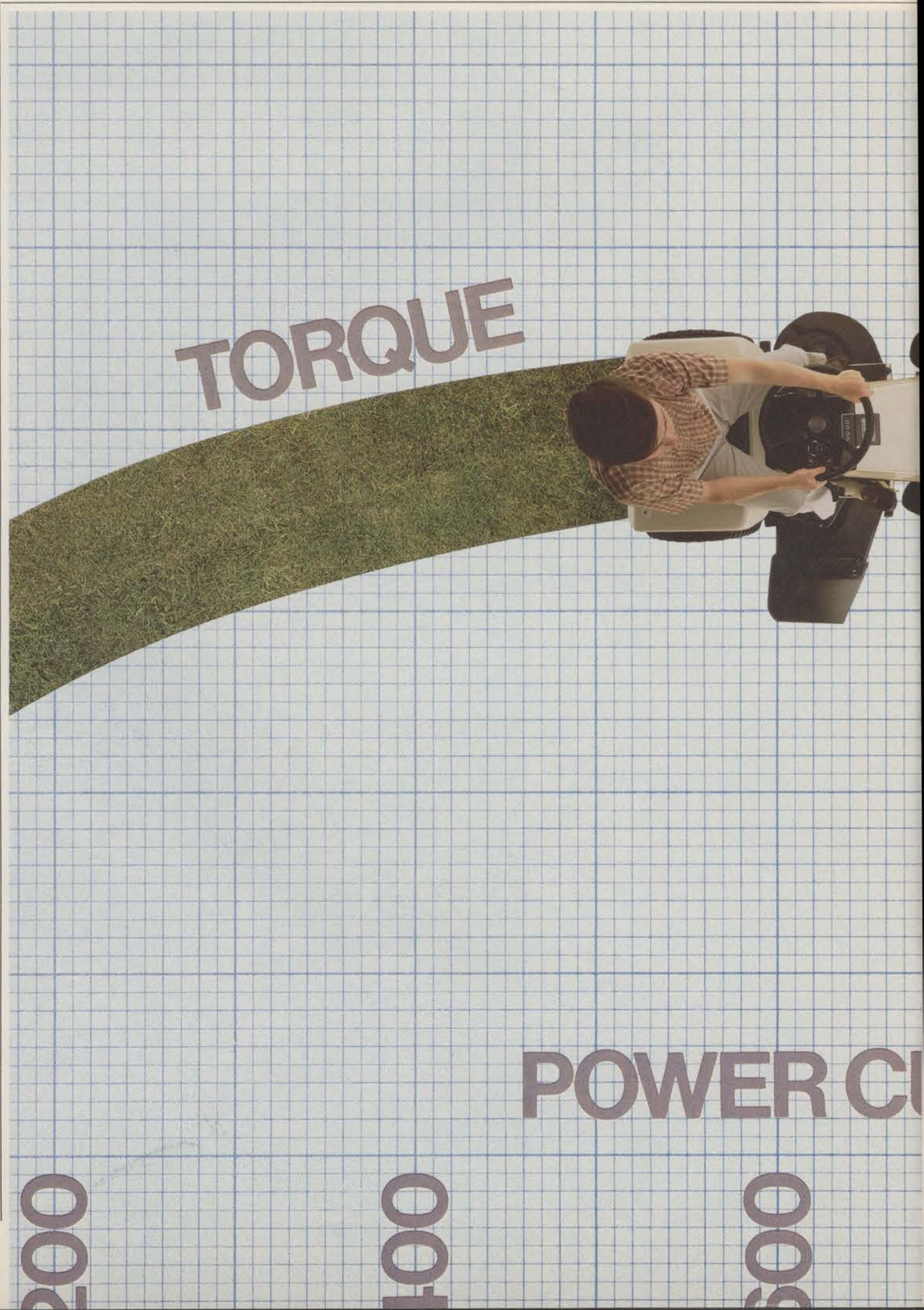
VAN FOSSEN: I think ChemLawn has a very obvious role that comes as a result of the company being the first to be really successful in the business, and hav-

ing successfully opened up new markets all across the country.

In some respects, ChemLawn becomes almost synonymous with lawn care. As a result of that, the practices that ChemLawn has followed over the 16 years tend to set the tone for what goes on in the industry. By that, I mean the tone is around agronomic soundness,

appearance, and the image the industry projects.

We set the standard, and everybody tends to say, "if you want to compete, you've got to try and live up to that standard." That means everything from trying to be responsible as a business person in the community to having a high sense of business ethics.





'Some people will go way overboard to claim that dry is superior when, in reality, they know better. Yet they continue to advertise it. It's that kind of approach that angers you.'

LCI: They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Are you flattered that so many lawn care companies try to copy ChemLawn, or is it a source of irritation?

VAN FOSSEN: A little bit of both. The reality is that, if you're successful in a successful indus-

try, you ought to expect to attract competition. The real essence of it is: what kind of competition is it, and are they competing on a fair basis?

An obvious example of what I consider to be basically an unsound premise is the distinction between liquid and dry. Some people will go way overboard to claim that dry is superior when, in reality, they know better. Yet they continue to advertise it.

It's that kind of approach that angers you, because the only answer is to come out with an advertisement that says liquid is so obviously better that any fool could see it. Agronomically, we know that it doesn't make any difference. It's just a question of how you make the application.

So it's that kind of competition that I don't particularly like or appreciate. They know better, but they're not reluctant to stretch advertising truth if they think it'll win them some customers. That's unfortunate. It's a basis of competition that ChemLawn won't use, one that becomes a sword for the unfair competitor.

LCI: How do you see the chemical lawn care industry developing in the future? And is that necessarily the way ChemLawn is going to develop too?

VAN FOSSEN: You would really have to go back 16 years to when ChemLawn started.

The concept of making liquid applications was really innovative, and it came from Dick Duke and his father recognizing the liquid applications common to the agricultural industry could be translated to the lawn care industry.

The equipment and the nature of fertilizers that we were using in 1969 have changed dramatically.

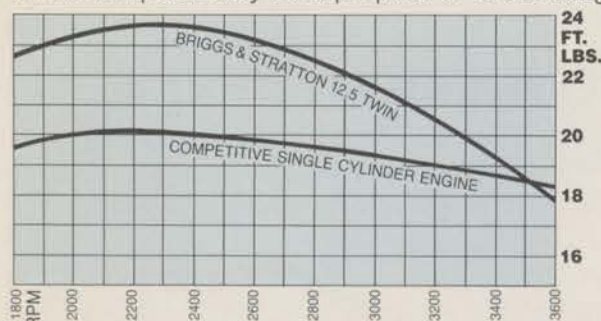
To give you an example, when ChemLawn first started, the basic fertilizers were a urea-based mix. Today, through research and development—a lot of it from our own research people—there's the ability to put down slow-release in liquid form, which didn't exist five years ago. It existed in terms of using a Blue Chip or Powder Blue or those kinds of things, but a slow-release in liquid form was just unheard of.

I think you'll continue to see those kinds of innovations coming along. I don't feel—by any stretch of the imagination—that we're at the point where everything's going to be done this way for the

to page 14

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The new Briggs & Stratton 12½ hp twin. All the power you need today. And then some. See your Briggs & Stratton representative for details.



The power in power equipment.

from page 13
next 15 years.

If anything, companies such as ChemLawn have to be continually aware of what's going in the scientific field, what might change the competitive marketplace. Everybody continues to look at growth retardants; you'll see new varieties of grass become, perhaps, more drought-resistant; and so on. The innovations won't be startling, but they're part of an evolutionary process that will change the whole industry.

LCI: Is there any unexplored territory in the field of marketing?

VAN FOSSEN: You really have to distinguish between advertising and marketing. To me, there's a major distinction.

Marketing is basically a total concept of what the business organization is all about: pricing policies, production strategies, what you're giving the customer. Ultimately, marketing depends on what the customer wants, and that involves market research.

So it isn't just advertising, and

'It isn't beyond the possibility that somebody in government might do something stupid.'

anybody who basically follows the idea that it's all advertising without understanding what the direction and strategy is, is eventually going to be wasting a lot of money.

LCI: Are there any dangerous spots in the industry's future, and if so, what can the industry do about them?

VAN FOSSEN: I keep up with that information through our research staff. It's stuff that cannot be ignored.

It isn't beyond the possibility that somebody in government might do something stupid. You've got to continually monitor that kind of stuff and do a better job of getting your message across.

The industry really doesn't have any axes to grind, in the sense of huge manufacturing facilities, and so on. So what they need to do is get the message across about what they're doing, the nature of the products and the safety involved.

A lot of this legislation concerns the ease—as opposed to the difficulty—of giving the customer what he wants. If you had some of these basic chemicals knocked out, I think it makes the job of producing a good lawn more difficult—not impossible, but more difficult.

The industry would have been

much better positioned to get the story across if the credibility of the federal EPA hadn't been called into question by some of the things that have happened recently.

A very credible Environmental Protection Agency is probably one of the most important things that can go on for the industry. But it's got to be a credible agency, and that credibility has to be built up, because if you're dealing with scientists who are looking at these materials, they're going to approach it on a scientific basis and not an emotional basis. If the scientists present their story accurately to EPA, and the EPA is

viewed as a credible organization, then I don't think you're going to see any crazy stuff happen.

It's important that federal regulations be of such a nature that people have confidence in them, and that they be approached soundly and on the basis of reality.

I think it's too bad Ruckelshaus left the EPA, because he would bring that kind of competence level back to the EPA.

I don't know the total story, but in some of the local legislation, you get an emotional issue caught with some other political issues, and then you get political trade-offs. Once you're in that kind of situation, you're running the risk

of something stupid. In that environment, anything can happen.

Local and state regulation is also a question of making sure they get the right information. Don't be misled: I think a lot of what you see at the local level is, in a sense, political. You can get a very small vocal group that raises a level of concern that is probably unjustified, and they can get a lot done. And there's a danger in that.

At the state level, you're dealing with people who have a higher level of understanding. When you get down to the local level, there's no expertise to judge what's being said unless they can depend on what their state and federal reg-

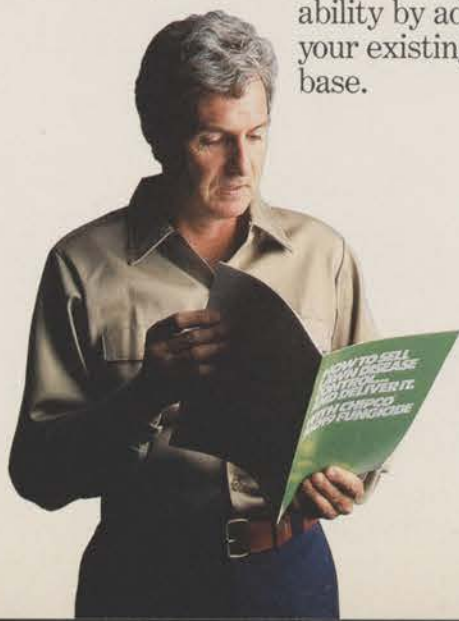


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ulators are saying.

The real danger is having uninformed legislators, be they local, state or federal who are passing this legislation in a political arena.

LCI: What is the future of the industry?

VAN FOSSEN: There's an enormous distinction between 1975 to 1980 and 1980 to 1985. It's a marketplace that's more sophisticated and there are more competitors in it. That has changed the nature of the game. It's not going to be as easy for the small guy to get into the business any more.

And it's going to be more diffi-

cult for the small guy to stay in the business—unless that person becomes more sophisticated about what he's doing. Sophistication in the areas of safe handling of chemicals, operating out of a legitimate facility as opposed to operating out of a garage, and being aware of the impact on the environment.

Unless small operators begin to realize those things, you're going to see a lot of consolidation in the industry over the next 15 years.

Fifteen years from now, you may very well wind up seeing maybe 10 or 15 major players, and that'll be it.

—Jerry Roche

MEETING DATES

June

Davey Tree Care/Urban Forestry Foreman Training, June 3-14, Kent, Ohio. Contact: Richard V. Jones, Davey Environmental Services, 117 South Water St., Kent, OH, 44240. (800) 321-7572 (except Ohio); (800) 227-1735 (Ohio).

Turf-Seed Field Day, June 20, Pure Seed Testing Research Farm, Hubbard, Ore. Contact: Turf-Seed Inc., P.O. Box 250, Hubbard, OR, 97032. (503) 981-9571.

"Planning for Profit," June 21-22, Miami, Fla. Contact: ALCA, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA, 22046. (703) 241-4004.

Lawn Institute Annual Meeting, June 25, Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tenn. Contact: Dr. Eliot C. Roberts, Box 108, Pleasant Hill, TN, 38578. (615) 277-3722.

University of Massachusetts Turf Field Day, June 26, South Deerfield, Mass. Contact: Dr. Joseph Troll, University of Massa-

chusetts, Plant and Soil Science, Stockbridge Hall, Amherst, MA, 01002. (413) 545-2353.

Fifth International Turfgrass Research Conference, June 30-July 5, Avignon, Cedex, France. Contact: John F. Shoulders, Agronomy Department, VPI & SU, Blacksburg, VA, 24061. (703) 552-4518.

July

PLCAA Regional Seminar, July 9, Powers Ferry Road Holiday Inn, Atlanta, Ga. Contact: Dick Bare, 3952 Gunin Rd., Norcross, GA, 30092. (404) 447-6037.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, July 11, Timonium (Md.) Holiday Inn. Contact: Frank Stevens, 7002 Belair Rd., Baltimore, MD, 21206. (301) 426-1111.

American Association of Nurserymen Convention, July 13-16, Sheraton Twin Towers, Orlando, Fla. Contact: Terri M. Gore, A.A.N., 1250 I St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC, 20005. (202) 789-2900.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, July 16, Montville (N.J.) Ramada Inn. Contact: Al Rumbo, 297 Broadway, Hillsdale, NJ, 07642. (201) 666-1333.

American Sod Producers Association Summer Convention and Field Days, July 17-19, The Prince Hotel, Toronto, Canada. Contact: Doug Fender, ASPA, 4415 West Harrison, Hillside, IL, 60162. (312) 449-2890.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, July 18, Worcester, Mass. Contact: Steve Evans or Frank Reynolds, 82 Herbert St., Framingham, MA, 01701. (617) 879-4510.

Landscape Supervisor's Workshop, July 19-20, Tulsa, Okla. Contact: ALCA, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA, 22046. (703) 241-4004.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, July 23, Monroeville (Pa.) Marriott. Contact: Mark Morgan, Davey Lawnscapes, Monroeville, PA, 15146. (412) 771-0330.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, July 25, Rochester (N.Y.) Hilton. Contact: Dave Sek, 225 Ballantyne Rd., Rochester, NY, 14623. (716) 436-2900.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, July 29-30, Hudson (Ohio) Holiday Inn. Contact: John Prusa, 4455 Akron-Cleveland Rd., Peninsula, OH, 44264. (216) 928-9785.

International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo, July 29-31, Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center, Louisville, Ky. Contact: Expo '85, P.O. Box 37130, Louisville, KY, 40233. (800) 558-8767.

August

PLCAA Regional Seminar, Aug. 1, Holiday Inn North, Cincinnati, Ohio. Contact: Rick Stanforth, 5699 Creek Rd., Cincinnati, OH, 45242. (513) 793-8484.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, Aug. 6, Livonia (Mich.) Holiday Inn. Contact: Tim Doppel, 6489 Sixteen Mile Rd., Sterling Heights, MI, 48077. (313) 939-3636.

Illinois Landscape Contractors Association Summer Field Day, Aug. 7, Kishwaukee College, Malta, Ill. Contact: Lucile Little, ILCA, 2200 S. Main St., Suite 301, Lombard, IL, 60148. (312) 932-8443.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, Aug. 8, Elmhurst Country Club, Chicago, Ill. Contact: Tom Hofer, 11927 Spaulding School Dr., Plainfield, IL, 60544. (815) 436-8777.

Finance & Pricing Fundamentals Workshop, August 10, San Francisco, Calif. Contact: ALCA, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA, 22046. (703) 241-4004.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, Aug. 13, Independence (Mo.) Howard Johnson's. Contact: Don Keller, P.O. Box 1962, Independence, MO, 64055. (816) 373-2135.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, Aug. 15, Chambers Road Holiday Inn, Denver, Col. Contact: Gary Vett, 1110 Valley, Colorado Springs, CO, 80917. (303) 596-0740.

Advanced Landscape Supervisor Workshop, Aug. 16-17, Chicago, Ill. Contact: ALCA, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA, 22046. (703) 241-4004.

University of Rhode Island Turfgrass Field Day, Aug. 21, Turfgrass Research Farm, Kingston, R.I. Contact: Dr. J.R. Skogley, Plant Science Dept., Woodward, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI, 02881. (401) 792-2570.

"Selecting and Recruiting," Aug. 22-23, Seattle, Wash. Contact: ALCA, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA, 22046. (703) 241-4004.

Landscape Supervisor's Workshop, Aug. 23-24, New York, N.Y. Contact: ALCA, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA, 22046. (703) 241-4004.

PLCAA Regional Seminar, Texas A&M Extension & Research Service. Contact: William Knoop, Texas A&M University, Dallas, TX, 75252. (214) 231-5362.

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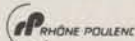
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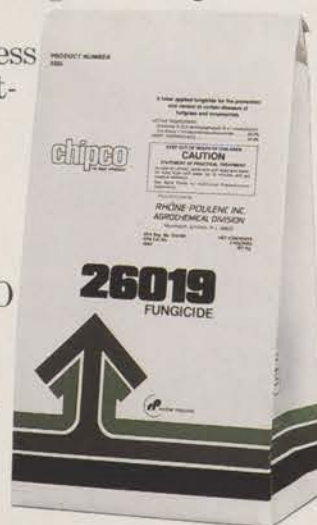
It's easy to use. And toxicity is low, so you and your customers get added peace of mind.

Expand your business and improve your profitability. With the right strategy, tactics and training in our free *Healthy Business Package*. And with the right fungicide: CHIPCO 26019 turf fungicide. Rhône-Poulenc Inc., Agrochemical Division, Monmouth Junction, New Jersey 08852.



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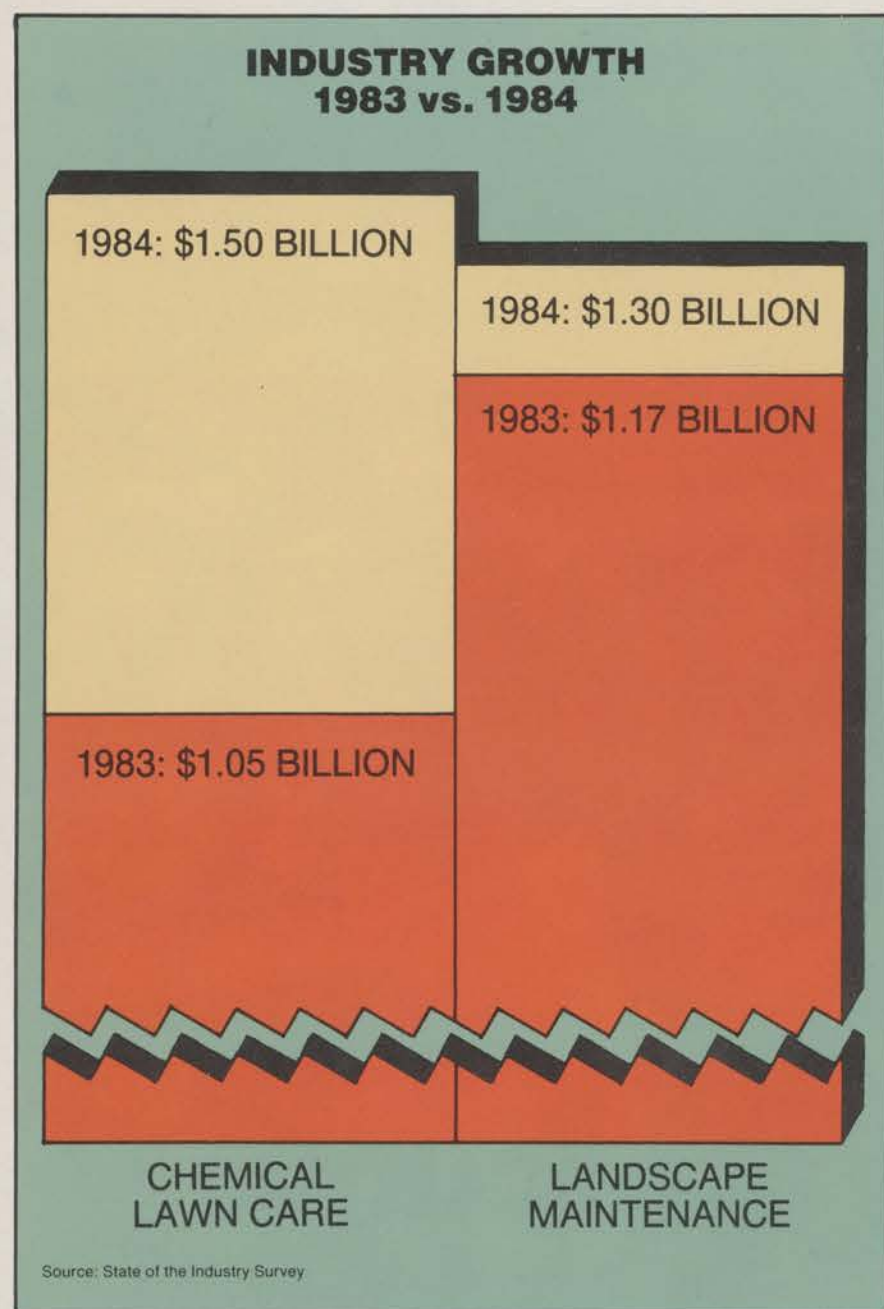
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Lawn care averages

from page 1



The Mountain region (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada), surprisingly, led the nation in landscape maintenance receipts with a per-company average of \$353,640.

New England was statistically the region of least lawn care/landscape maintenance with the average reader's business grossing just \$83,050 last year.

National readership averages were \$355,879 for size of chemical lawn care company and \$186,210 for size of landscape maintenance company. Overall, the average reader's company grossed \$250,982 with a pre-tax profit of 21.25 percent.

So 1984 exceeded last year's expectations. In our 1983 survey, readers predicted that their businesses would grow to an average of \$247,000, about \$3,000 less than the final figure. And the growth trend will continue in 1985, respondents say. They predict an industry average of 23.99 percent growth this year.

The buying habits of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY readers will also grow this season, the survey found, by 22.45 percent. The largest increase will come in the area of tree

care equipment as companies diversify (278.7 percent). Spray tank purchases were expected to increase 219.5 percent to \$18.3 million, and irrigation equipment 194.8 percent to \$23.4 million.

Grass seed will also show a good increase this year, 53.9 percent to \$25.02 million.

Areas showing decreasing activity among lawn care purchasers are post-emergence herbicides, tractors and—surprisingly—aeration equipment.

Purchases of walk-behind mowers, in addition, are expected to decrease 17.1 percent, but purchases of riding lawn mowers are expected to be up by 30.3 percent.

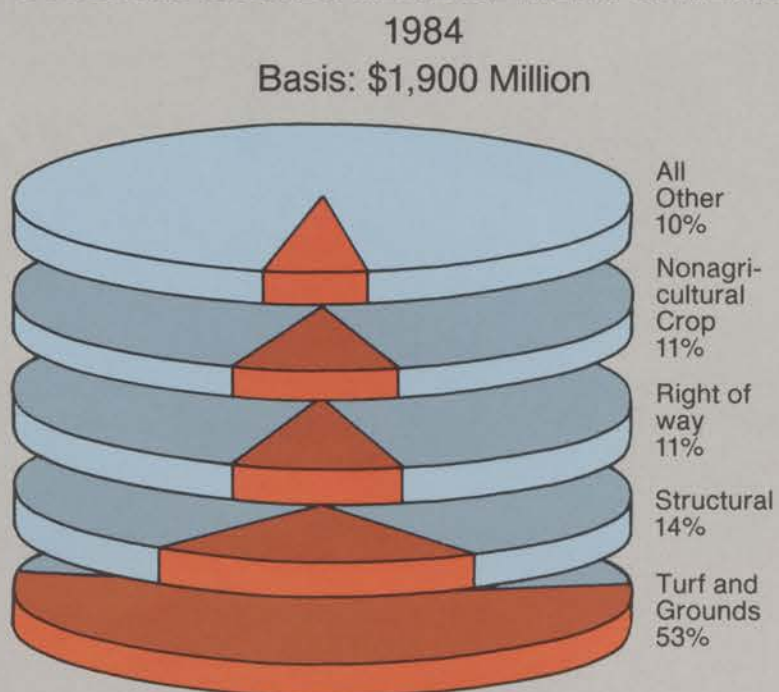
Overall, the lawn care industry will make purchases totalling \$415.48 million.

Diversification appears to be a growing trend within the industry. Of the 380 respondents to the survey, 50 said they are also involved in landscape installation and design. Twenty-two said they service trees, 19 said they are involved in landscape construction, and 18 said they are involved in the sod business.

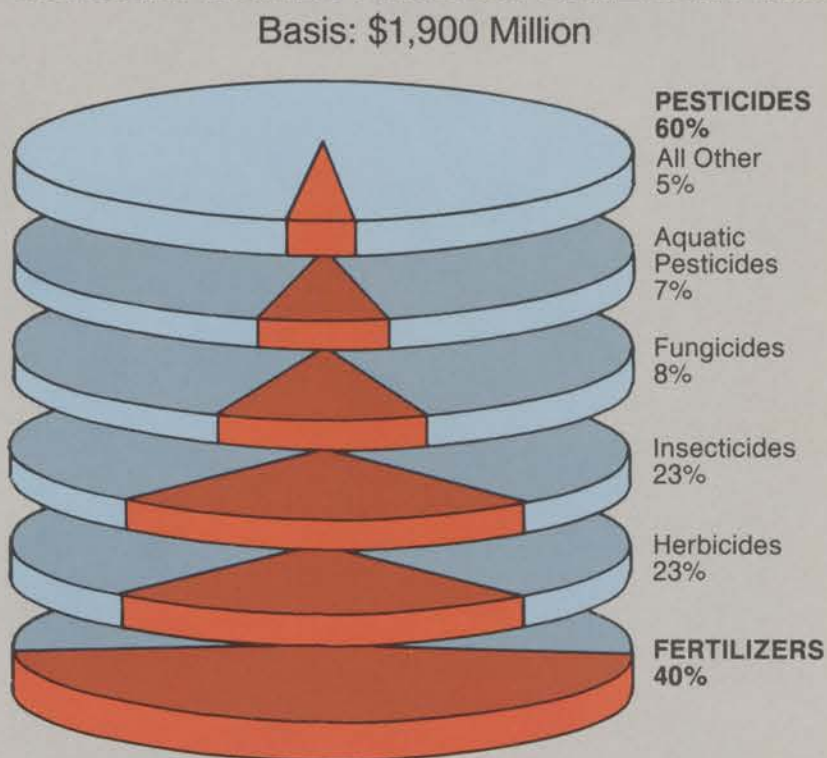
Snow removal, with 13 responses, was another popular sideline.

Lawn care boosts sales of pesticides

CONSUMPTION BY MANAGEMENT CATEGORY



CONSUMPTION BY PRODUCT CATEGORY 1984



Source: C.H. Kline & Co.

The rapid growth of such end uses as chemical lawn care has spurred manufacturers' sales of pesticides to grow to \$1.9 billion in 1984.

That total is considerably more than the \$1.2 billion registered in 1981, according to a report by Charles H. Kline & Co.

Another reason for the sharp increase, the Kline company says, is the increasing popularity of higher-performance products like slow-release fertilizers.

Overall, about 125 companies offer some 350 different formulations for professional end uses. Pesticides, which are composed of five major categories, accounted

for 60 percent of dollar sales in 1984; fertilizers the other 40 percent.

Lawn care companies, the leading individual end users, are part of the turf and grounds category, along with golf course, landscapes and educational facilities.

Kline & Co.'s new survey, with field interviews scheduled for this summer and publication by early 1986, will be contained in one volume with a 700-page segment for the U.S. and a 150-page segment for Canada. Information on subscription terms is available from C.H. Kline & Co., 330 Passaic Ave., Fairfield, NJ, 07006.

AVERAGE BUSINESS SIZE BY REGION

REGION (NSV = not statistically valid)	AVG. BUS. SIZE OVERALL CHEMICAL LAWN CARE	AVG. BUS. SIZE OVERALL LANDSCAPE MAINTEN.	AVG. BUS. SIZE OVERALL
NEW ENGLAND (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT)	\$94,871	\$77,136	\$83,050
MID ATLANTIC (NY, NJ, PA)	\$191,719	\$308,000	\$146,232
EAST NORTH CENTRAL (OH, IN, IL, MI, WI)	\$908,938	\$137,302	\$415,338
WEST NORTH CENTRAL (MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS)	\$101,000	\$155,014	\$136,666
SOUTH ATLANTIC (DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL)	\$182,141	\$256,069	\$238,356
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL (KY, TN, AL, MS)	\$251,900	\$134,182	\$165,573
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL (AR, LA, OK, TX)	\$734,020 (NSV)	\$183,864	\$355,787 (NSV)
MOUNTAIN (MT, ID, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, NV)	\$167,500	\$353,640	\$291,593
PACIFIC (AK, WA, OR, CA, HI)	\$99,500	\$132,909	\$127,130
NATIONAL TOTALS	\$355,879	\$186,210	\$250,982

Source: State of the Industry Survey

IN 1985, WHAT DO YOU PREDICT YOUR EXPENDITURES WILL BE ON:

	% SAMPLE PURCHASING	AVERAGE PER PURCHASER	PROJECTION TO LCI READERSHIP	% CHANGE SINCE 1984
CHEMICALS, SUPPLIES				
GRANULAR FERTILIZER	84.7	\$9,755.70	\$92.41 MILLION	+ 13.5
PRE-EMERGENCE HERBICIDES	73.9	\$5,259.18	\$43.46 MILLION	+ 4.6
LIQUID FERTILIZER	32.9	\$11,701.40	\$43.05 MILLION	+ 8.6
INSECTICIDES	75.0	\$3,518.92	\$29.51 MILLION	+ 23.2
GRASS SEED	72.1	\$3,102.86	\$25.02 MILLION	+ 53.9
POST-EMERGENCE HERBICIDES	73.7	\$2,748.33	\$22.65 MILLION	- 4.6
FUNGICIDES	58.2	\$1,704.73	\$11.10 MILLION	+ 3.1
SOIL AMENDMENTS	33.2	\$2,563.57	\$9.52 MILLION	+ 74.7
PLANT GROWTH REGULATORS	16.6	\$501.03	\$0.93 MILLION	N/A
EQUIPMENT				
TRACTORS	19.7	\$11,551.33	\$25.46 MILLION	- 15.5
IRRIGATION EQUIPMENT	19.2	\$10,902.63	\$23.41 MILLION	+194.8
SPRAY TANKS	33.4	\$4,901.04	\$18.31 MILLION	+219.5
RIDING LAWN MOWERS	19.7	\$7,518.00	\$16.56 MILLION	+ 30.3
WALK-BEHIND MOWERS	46.3	\$2,665.86	\$13.80 MILLION	- 17.1
SPRAYERS, PUMPS, ETC.	52.1	\$2,350.63	\$13.70 MILLION	+ 27.8
SPREADERS	47.4	\$1,520.19	\$8.06 MILLION	N/A
TREE CARE EQUIPMENT	25.5	\$2,888.06	\$8.00 MILLION	+278.7
AERATION EQUIPMENT	22.1	\$2,805.37	\$6.93 MILLION	- 1.7
STRING TRIMMERS	41.3	\$778.47	\$3.60 MILLION	+ 11.8
1985 PROJECTED TOTALS = \$415.48 MILLION +22.45%				

Source: State of the Industry Survey

LANDSCAPE
MANAGEMENT
PROCEDURES
AND BENEFITS

	% YES	% NO
Are company uniforms mandatory?	74	26
Does medical insurance include dental?	21	79
Is a report of activities left with the client each week?	37	63
Are mow crews responsible for pruning, mulching?	64	36
Are employees charged for equipment they damage due to negligence?	34	36
Are employees charged for vehicles damaged due to negligence?	24	53
Do you have published job descriptions for all jobs?	38	62
Do you have formal policy and procedures manual?	71	29
Do you have a full-time graduate horticulturist on your staff?	79	21
Do foremen perform general equipment maintenance?	83	17

Source: ALCA

LANDSCAPE
MANAGEMENT
PROCEDURES
AND BENEFITS

	% YES	% NO
Are employees allowed to use company vehicles to go to lunch?	64	36
Does your company pay employees' educational for job-related courses?	83	17
Are mechanics required to have their own tools?	33	67
Are employees charged for lost tools?	57	43
Do you have an IRA contribution plan?	9	91
Do you provide complete family medical coverage paid by the company?	29	71
Do you provide medical insurance with no deductible?	7	93
Do you provide a car allowance or company vehicle for field supervisors?	80	20
Does your company conduct in-house training?	73	27
Does your company pay employees while they attend in-house training?	80	20
Do your foremen sign no-compensation agreements?	18	82

Source: ALCA

State of the Industry

Handling customer complaints

Only too often, the lawn care industry suffers the same problem as Paul Newman in "Cool Hand Luke" did: "a failure to communicate."

According to LAWN CARE INDUSTRY's 1985 State of the Industry survey, most of the problems indigenous to the industry could be easily solved by maintaining proper contact with customers.

The most common customer complaint, according to LCI readers, is that their lawn care/landscape maintenance service costs too much. Of the readers responding to this question, 23.4 percent cited this problem.

Next on the list of popular customer complaints was weed control (20.3 percent), followed by impatience with service (12.7 percent), unrealistic expectations

total, at no charge."

Here are some of the most common complaints and what readers had to say about them:

'You cost too much'

"We discourage price shoppers, stay firm in our rates, and emphasize quality, service and professionalism."

"There are Hondas and Rolls Royces. They both provide transportation, but they are not the

same. We offer the Rolls Royce of chemical lawn care. We are not the lawn service for everyone, and we don't want every lawn."

"I usually give the customer the locations of lawns done by cheaper competitors, along with a couple of mine. This is usually the last I hear about it. If I hear too much of this from any one customer, I drop them the following year."

"I tell them, if they want cheap

work done, to hire someone else; if they want quality work done, we'd like them to be our customer. The cheapies too often don't pay their bills anyway. We are very selective about who will be our customer. Our uncollectables are less than 1/10th of one percent as a result of this selectivity."

From Minnesota: "I ask the customer how much he can afford to do, and do that much work. I plan to bill the new landfill state

PERCENT RESPONDING "YES: TO FACTORS OF MAJOR BUSINESS CONCERS

Concern	% Yes
Insurance costs	67.8
Vehicle costs	62.2
Liability costs	54.7
Govt. regulations	53.6
Interest rates	53.1
Maintenance costs	43.5
Others' ethics	39.0
Customer retention	36.0
Collections	24.0
Employee benefits	19.6

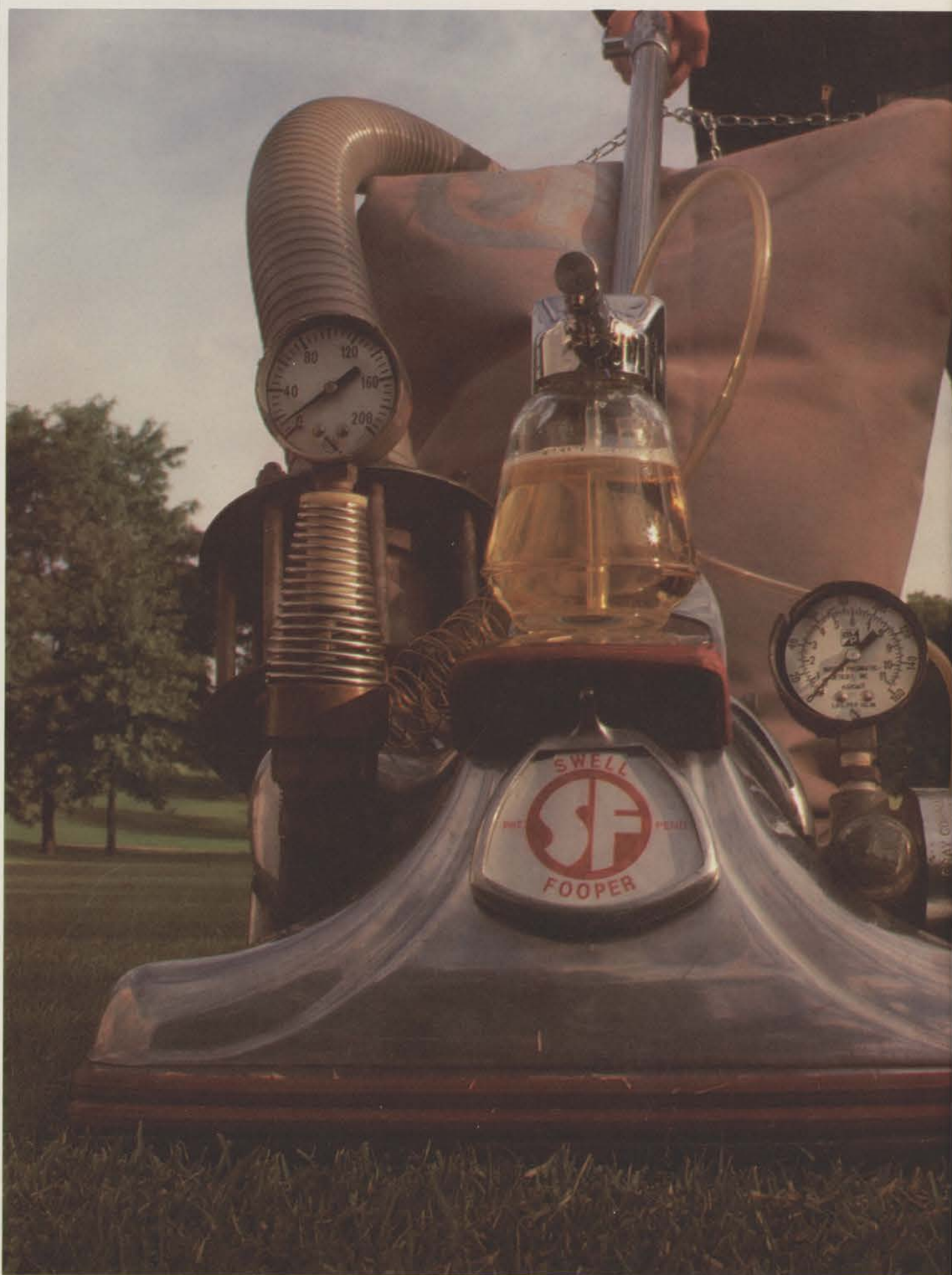
(6.3 percent) and dry, brown spots (5.7 percent).

Other frequent responses were faulty workmanship, complaints over field employees, disease control, too little time spent on the job, and other competing companies.

"I don't believe there is a complaint that could be categorized as most common," offered one respondent, "but I do feel there are dozens of excuses that occur, more than once (not by the same customer). Seemingly, customers use the most believable excuse to attain their desired response from the company."

One LCO, whose advertising program is based on good customer relations, has a hard time coping with complaints.

"If we get more than three a year, I go into deep depression and hit the bottle," he admits. "Sometimes as many as three bottles of Pepsi on very hot days. But when we get a complaint, we rectify it to the customer's satisfaction, in



tax as a separate item so people can see how much it is. I also bill hauling and landfill charges separately so the customer knows just how they are spending their money."

"I tell them that we put on the best quality product on the market and our lawns look extremely good. I probably do not have the turnover the guy doing the cheaper job does, and it shows. Plus, we are locally owned and operated, and will always be there should any problem arise."

"Customers resent being billed for the 'little extras' they request that are not specified in the con-

tract. I bill these at a cost-plus-20-percent so the customer can see exactly where the figures come from. A policy of fair price for fair work is the best way to buffer the customer's attitude."

'We still have weeds'

"We check it out personally, and 99 percent of the time will probably respray. We need to find someone who will make a weed control herbicide that will work. Herbicide companies always have an excuse why it didn't work."

"We provide free unlimited callbacks."

"The chemicals seem to work well enough. The problem seems

to come from poor cultivation methods employed by customers, such as cutting height and frequency, and watering practices. The problem is considerably more difficult to handle when the lawn is cut by another lawn maintenance company, and they refuse to change their practices on our request."

"Annual weeds—oxalis, purslane, spotted spurge—are nemeses of lawn companies. They are difficult to handle without harm to lawns during the summer. All chemicals advertised to control these have been inferior, or priced where not affordable to use."

"We (1) meet with the customer in person; (2) listen to his complaint; (3) acknowledge the need for improvement; (4) handle/treat the problem; (5) follow up with a call to the customer; and (6) repeat 1 through 5, if necessary."

"Because of our small size, we try and keep our pricing down—which means cutting down on pre-emergent applications. Also, we are not strong believers in spot spraying as an efficient control system. Hopefully, we will be able to convert to a liquid spray program that will be cost-efficient and successful."

"We try to educate the customer. Good public relations and communications will keep them happy probably 98 percent of the time."

'Where have you been?'

"In the springtime, everybody wants their work done yesterday. I try to give the customer a completion date when the contract is signed. I also explain the problems encountered during spring (weather, supplier foul-ups, etc.) and communicate any problems of delay with the customer."

"We shift our labor hour emphasis from those who complain to those who don't complain."

"Blame the northeast weather, or the limited number of hours in a day."

"I tell the customers that I have put off the service because of the weather, and that they are better off because the products are being applied late so they will get better response. I tell them that the 'big boys' have to be out every day no matter what because they've got so many customers, and that my lawns look as good—if not better—than the ones down the street."

"We explain our schedule, give them a date, remind about weather limitations—and then make sure we get there when promise, and that the result is worth the wait."

'It still looks bad'

"Most problems involve a failure to communicate effectively. We have been successful by openly stating prior to commencing work what we can and cannot do."

"We supply each new customer with a brochure explaining their responsibilities and the impact that extreme weather may have. Our quarterly newsletter continues this information, and the net effect is below-average customer complaints and above-average customer retention."

'You really messed up'

"Workers are told to go back and handle the complaint. If it's not satisfactorily handled, the customer probably won't pay the bill. If the customer doesn't pay the bill, the workers don't get paid for the

HOW TO TAKE OUT SURFACE FEEDERS AND GRUBS IN ONE SWELL FOOP.

To take out surface feeders like sod webworm larvae, chinch bugs, billbugs, and flea beetles, just follow these simple steps.

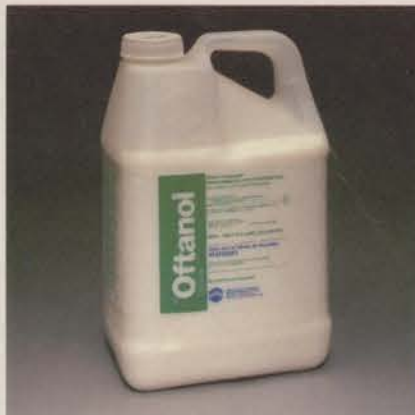
Step one, get some [®]OFTANOL 2 Insecticide. It's the liquid formulation of OFTANOL. If you think OFTANOL is too expensive to use on surface feeders, check out step two.

Step two, mix it at the *economical rate* and spray where the bugs are. It'll work.

The same product, OFTANOL 2, does a bang up job on grubs. Mix it at the recommended rate and spray it on. Use OFTANOL anytime, as a preventive in the spring or as a curative, whenever grubs are a problem.

Surface feeders and grubs, two serious problems with one serious solution. OFTANOL 2.

OFTANOL is also available in a granular formulation. Always read the label before use.



**OFTANOL 2.
WHEN YOU'RE SERIOUS
ABOUT SURFACE
FEEDERS AND GRUBS.**



Möbay Chemical Corporation
Specialty Products Group
Box 4913, Kansas City, Mo. 64120

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Farbenfabriken Bayer GmbH, Leverkusen.

job. Ninety-nine percent of all complaints are handled with no problem the day we get the complaint, and most of our customers have been with us more than 10 years."

'What contract?'

"Many times, the customer—especially in dealing with homeowner associations—expects services not included in the contract. In some cases, this was because individual owners did not read their copies or did not receive one. We have attempted to improve communications to alleviate this and other types of misunderstandings."

'Please, no chemicals'

"Occasionally, we are questioned as to what we are spraying and why. We explain this immediately. Some request that we use no pesticides on their property, which I feel we must comply with, if that is their request."

Conclusions

Certainly, the easiest way to deal with customer complaints is to avoid them in the first place. Consider the formula offered by this reader:

"This will be our 55th year. We know the area and most of our customers. If we don't know

them, we find out about them before we get in too deep.

"The most important thing is not what we should be doing, but rather what we shouldn't be doing. We try not to overbook during the busy seasons, and we are very selective as to what we do and who we do it for.

"We try to be as honest as possible when answering customers' questions. We tell them that we use the best employees and material available, and we don't cut corners. If we do have a complaint, we make sure the customer is listened to and satisfied.

"After all, our reputation is at stake."

News

Safety film announced by PLCAA, Ciba-Geigy

Ciba-Geigy and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America have combined forces to provide a safety film that will soon be available to PLCAA members.

The film, "Pesticide Safety and Handling," is an all-exclusive safety film which consists of four sections: (1)employees' involvement; (2)handling bulk pesticides (pre-mixing, accidents, etc.); (3)product transportation to warehouse; and (4)after warehouse delivery.

The copyrighted film, produced in the fourth quarter of 1984, is the first of its kind and will be available at no cost to members of the PLCAA, according to Ron Fister of Ciba-Geigy. The PLCAA will have full control of the film, Fister says.

Ciba-Geigy and the PLCAA also have plans for other activities to be made available through their organizations. The PLCAA is in the process of planning programs for its members. "We're looking at various things," Jim Brooks, PLCAA executive director, says.

The PLCAA already has two additions to its Management Monograph Series: one about drafting a personnel manager, and the other on the information a lawn care operator needs to confront a banker. The PLCAA also plans to prepare a slide show on diseases with Ciba-Geigy, as well as one on weeds with Dow.

The PLCAA is "in the midst of an operating performance survey," Brooks says, as well as a membership needs-assessment.

Ciba-Geigy is considering the possibility of offering two management training courses in 1986, to be conducted at the company's expense. The courses would be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis, Fister says, with the possibility for expansion in 1988 if the seminars gain acceptance.

WHAT HAS PLCAA DONE FOR YOU LATELY?

TAKE A LOOK.

If you haven't checked out the Professional Lawn Care Association of America recently, then you're in for a surprise. We're offering a bundle of

new benefits that make joining PLCAA more rewarding than ever! We even have a new name for our service—**The ProSource**. Here's what we've been up to and how you can benefit:

- ✓ **NEW! Employee Life/Health/Disability Benefit Program.** A program designed with your business in mind. It offers flexible, comprehensive Life/Health/Disability group insurance that you can tailor to the needs and budget of your company.
- ✓ **NEW! PLCAA Safety Manual.** Emergency procedures, pesticide safety procedures, inspections, health programs and more—a complete, practical safety guide for reference and technician training.
- ✓ **NEW! PLCAA Management Monograph Series.** In-depth, easy to understand reference booklets on subjects vital to the operation of your business.
- ✓ **NEW! Legal Update Bulletin.** An exclusive monthly bulletin for members. Edited by PLCAA Attorney, Richard I. Lehr, and focused on tax, investment, labor, and legal information of interest to the industry.
- ✓ **NEW! Public Issues Alert Committee**—continually updates the membership on regulations and legislation—local, state, and national—that affect the lawn care industry. A resource for understanding and involvement in the public issues vital to the future of your business.
- ✓ **Plus a Whole Lot More...** PLCAA membership offers, in addition to these new benefits, an impressive lineup of publications and programs that are invaluable to any lawn care business:
 - **PLCAA Technical Resource Manual.** An important guide for helping to operate your business on a professional and agronomically sound basis.
 - **Turf Talks,** PLCAA's bi-monthly member newsletter.
 - **PLCAA Regional Seminars.** Intensive, one-day sessions offered on a regional basis and at a reduced fee to members.
 - **Annual PLCAA Conference and Show.** The week-long gathering of the best in lawn care that has become the one must convention of the year.
 - **The Professional Lawn Care Credit Association**—On hand to help you meet your delinquent account collection needs.
 - **Insurance Clout**—Comprehensive Property and Casualty Insurance that offer members excellent protection at competitive rates.

No matter how large or small your operation, the **ProSource** is your source for the best, most meaningful lawn care information and help. Your membership investment goes to work for you immediately—that's the PLCAA promise. Join now and grow with us!

The ProSource



Tell Me More!

Send me more information on what the PLCAA can do for me and my business.

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COMPANY _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP _____ PHONE _____

CLIP AND MAIL TO:

PROFESSIONAL LAWN CARE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
1225 Johnson Ferry Rd., N.E.
Suite B-220, Marietta, GA 30067

**Safety Manual
PLCAA**

Join now and receive FREE your copy of the new PLCAA **Safety Manual**, a 64-page pesticide and safe practices guide.

PLCAA convention:

Join the Professional Lawn Care Association at its annual convention and trade show, Nov. 18-21 at the Curtis Hixon Convention Center in beautiful Tampa, Fla.

For more information, contact:

**Jim Brooks
PLCAA**

1225 Johnson Ferry Rd.
Suite B-220
Marietta, GA, 30067
Phone: (404) 977-5222

'Specialists in human craziness' key to war with environmentalists

Edith Efron, speaking to a variety of businessmen involved in the production and application of pesticides, believes "you all need to hire specialists in human craziness."

Efron, author of "The Apocalypics," was guest luncheon speaker at the Herbicide Issues Survival Training Workshop in Atlanta recently.

With Efron pointing the way, and with state-level pro-pesticide coalitions popping up all over the place, pesticide manufacturers and users appear to finally be getting the message: environmentalists are out to destroy their businesses.

In the last two months, coalitions have been formed in Connecticut and Georgia, the former to combat proposed pre-notification legislation, the latter to combat legislation against negative option-type contractual agreements.

But not enough is being done, and it's not being done quick enough.

"Pesticide controversy is now occurring in some 26 states," said workshop speaker Ray Russell of Dow Chemical Co. "It's everybody's problem, and you have to come to grips with that reality."

The "survival" workshop was sponsored by the Coalition for a Reasonable 2,4-D Policy.

"It isn't the majority oftentimes that will make changes in policy," added Jim Brooks, executive director of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America. "It's you and me and others like us who are changing public policy to where we're doing the most good for the most people. But if the majority is not given balanced information, they will be swayed."

Russell predicted that five to eight states will attempt to enact groundwater legislation before the first of next year.

"Groundwater is going to be a significant issue," he said, listing also pre-notification, sign-posting and right-to-know issues. "In some states, pesticide users are being required to supply alternative sources of drinking water and to clean up groundwater that's been contaminated."

"If you lack expertise on this subject, you'd better get up to speed quickly."

Russell said that one of the most difficult problems to cope with is the public's fear of cancer-causing agents: "chemophobia" he called it. That subject was ad-

"The public is not just ignorant, it's full of falsehoods."

—Efron



dressed by Efron, who wrote "The Apocalypics" as an answer to Rachel Carson's controversial 1962 book "Silent Spring."

"All over the United States, businessmen like yourselves are being told to grasp journalism, communications, physiology, sociology" in an effort to save their right to use chemicals, Efron



STOP GRUBS FROM THE FIRST BITE TO THE LAST GASP.

Grubs are a hardy breed. They're tough to prevent and even tougher to get rid of once they start chowing down on the roots of your turf.

One thing that puts them off their feed is *OFTANOL 5% Granular insecticide.

Another is new OFTANOL 2 Insecticide. It's a liquid formulation of OFTANOL, containing two pounds of active ingredient per gallon.

The nifty thing about OFTANOL, liquid or granular, is that it stops grub damage fast, even before it kills. After an application of OFTANOL, grubs stop feeding and the damage stops. Use it as a preventive, in the spring, or as a curative anytime grubs are a problem.

Grubs, one serious problem with two serious solutions. OFTANOL. Always read the label before use.



OFTANOL. WHEN YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT GRUBS.



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noted. "Why are you in this mess, and why is the public so afraid?"

Efron noted that most of the cancer research conducted by American scientists in the 1970s was not accurate, as she stated in "The Apocalypics." That research has been since disproven by scientists from Europe and Japan.

"The (American) studies fell apart in the scientific world, but it was largely not covered by the media, and unknown to the public," she said. "The public is not just ignorant, it's full of falsehoods."

And Mary Ann Ford of Union Carbide, agreed, later telling the



Russell



Brooks



Ford

audience that "honest ignorance is okay, but 25 years of bad education is not going to be erased overnight."

"The more bits and pieces you

can disseminate to the public, the more people can form their own opinions, the more we can erode the erroneous beliefs," Ford continued. "Answer the human,

down-to-earth questions, and you might not have to worry about the bigger ones.

"Rachel Carson has not been around for a while. So it's time we stopped bemoaning her climate and started to create one of our own."

Brooks said the lawn care industry has a lot of good things it can say. "The problem is, we're not saying them," he added. "We're not being heard as an industry. We have four to five million customers in residential lawn care, and that's some audience!"

Efron concluded her noon speech with a challenge to all chemical users, from lawn care to cosmetics:

"No other group would accept being labelled piranhas, so why in the hell are you so nice? Everybody makes political problems for you, but you don't know how to make political problems for other people."

—Jerry Roche

LETTERS

To the editor:

Your recent article on slow-release fertilizers (May, 1985) was most interesting and informative. I would like to comment on several areas in the article.

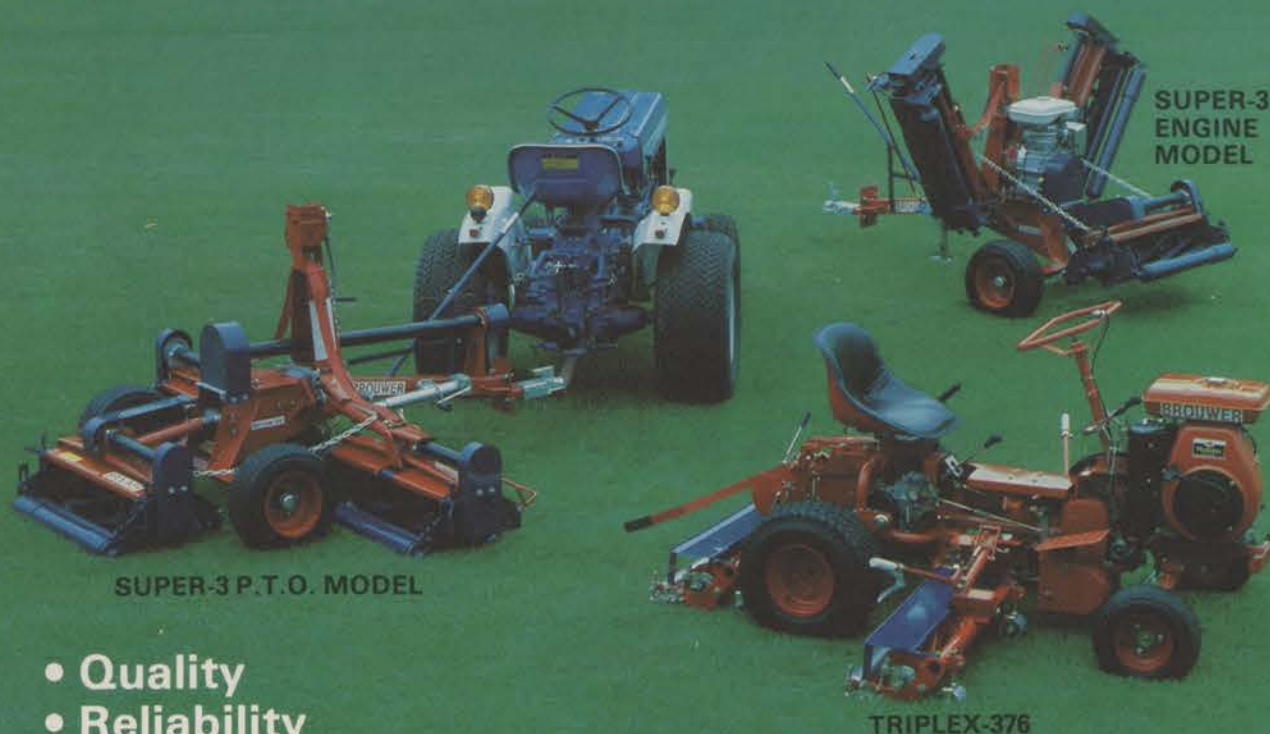
Number one: according to the American Association of Plant Food Control Officials, slow-release fertilizers are defined as "any fertilizer product containing a minimum of 15% water insoluble nitrogen (WIN)." To my knowledge, Nitro-26 does not contain the minimum 15% WIN.

Number two: although the use of the words "screw up" is acceptable in some areas of the business world, it is not the language I use in reference to our product, Fluf, and its use by the professional lawn care industry. Fluf offers the smaller liquid LCOs a margin of safety, as it does not burn and releases slowly over six to eight weeks.

One final point: slow-release liquid fertilizers are normally suspension formulations—not clear solutions—as evidenced by their WIN and non-burning features in the suspension formulations. The suspension formulations (similar to Fluf) are better suited to low volume spraying than clear solutions (similar to Formolene) as they have a pH around seven, do not burn, and have less free urea. Clear solutions have higher pHs (around 9-10), higher free urea, and when used in low volume spraying can cause burning and, in some instances, skin irritation. Hence, Fluf and suspension-type fertilizers are better suited for low volume spraying.

Martin McGinn
President, W.A. Cleary

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Reels are dynamically balanced to provide a beautiful fine cut.

Outstanding Features:

- Free floating reels with anti-scalp rollers
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- The transmission has 3 speeds forward and 1 reverse. Also a diff' lock is standard
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- Mows up to 30 acres (12.1 ha) per day

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Aerator is durable, low-maintenance

Engineered and built for continuous use by lawn care companies and other turf professionals, the new Lesco Aerator-30 is a durable, low-maintenance machine which can aerate 9,000 square feet in just 15 minutes.

The Aerator-30 includes 30 1/2-inch diameter spoons, five per disc on 5 1/2-inch centers. It is available with open or closed spoons. Overall width is 30 inches with a 28-inch aerating width.

For easy transport and convenient loading, the unit has two steel caster wheels with pneumatic tires. It is run by a Briggs & Stratton I/C recoil start engine.

Circle No. 201 on Reader Inquiry Card

Impact pop-up sprinklers rugged

A new line of impact rotor pop-up sprinklers are tough enough to stand up to the most rugged duty, according to their manufacturer, Rain Bird.



The case and cover of the Mini-Paw series sprinklers are molded of abuse-resistant Cylolac brand AVS engineering thermoplastic, Grade GSM.

Available with "Seal-a-Matic" option to prevent wasted water and soil erosion due to low sprinkler head drainage, the sprinklers will operate in a full circle or can be adjusted from 20 to 240 degree arc. They operate at water pressures from 25 to 50 psi, and can be spaced from 27 to 49 feet.

Circle No. 202 on Reader Inquiry Card

Ramps, platforms for easy transport

Arch ramps and clearance platforms for the transportation of mobile equipment by pickup truck are being introduced by Worksaver. They are designed to increase the time available for grounds maintenance by making

equipment movement safer and easier.

The arch ramps, available in four models, provide extra clearance between machinery and truck bed during loading. Cleats are implanted at both ends of the ramps.

Clearance platforms are suitable for use with any standard size pickup. They position equipment above the truck's fender wells, allowing larger machinery with wide underslung mowers to be easily transported.

When not in use, the arch



ramps can be stored under the clearance platforms.

Circle No. 203 on Reader Inquiry Card

Turf supplier has new grooming tools

A new line of grooming tools has

been introduced by Jacobsen Division of Textron.

The Jacobsen edger is powered by a three hp Briggs & Stratton engine, rides on four tires and has a nine-inch blade with variable depth adjustment.

Both string trimmers, straight shaft models, have manual string advance, twin handles and double shoulder harnesses. The J-27 is powered by a 27 cc two-cycle engine, the J-35 by a 35 cc unit.

Weighing just 23 pounds, the J-55 Back Pack Blower has a hose to page 28



A mower that doesn't work every day only cuts your productivity.

When you cut grass for a living, you can't afford equipment that's undependable. Or difficult to service. Because the longer your tractor is down, the longer the grass gets.

That's why so many people put a John Deere 650 or 750 Compact Utility Tractor to work on their mowing jobs. They're built with traditional John Deere quality and dependability.

Both are designed around rugged, fuel-sparing, water-cooled diesel engines. A 2-cylinder in the 650 (17 engine hp, 14.5 PTO hp). And a 3-cylinder in the 750 (20 engine hp, 18 PTO hp).

And both come equipped with features often reserved for more expensive tractors. Like a sliding-gear transmission with 8 forward and 2 reverse speeds. Like

differential lock, a Category "1" 3-point hitch, and 540-rpm rear PTO. And like hand and foot throttles, and optional front-wheel drive.

All that plus a reputation for reliability that's second to none. In fact we're so confident of the durability of our equipment that we're offering a new 2-year limited warranty. See your John Deere dealer for more details.

To get the name of the dealer nearest you, or a free folder on the John Deere 650 and 750 Compact Utility Tractors, call 800-447-9126 toll free (800-322-6796 in Illinois). Or write John Deere, Dept. 67, Moline, Illinois 61265.

Look into a John Deere 650 or 750. Because a mower that doesn't run every day will cost you a lot more money in the long run.



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Circle No. 102 on Reader Inquiry Card

TOOLS, TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Leave clippings

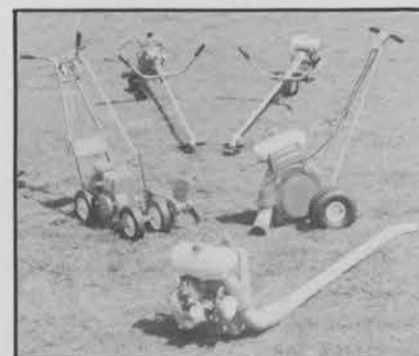
The practice of returning grass clippings to a home lawn can improve the quality of a turfgrass and reduce the fertilization requirements of the lawn, according to Drs. C.H. Peacock and R.J. Blace of the University of Florida.

Turfgrass clippings are 80 percent water and 20 percent dry matter. Microbial decomposition of the dry matter releases significant amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium for turfgrass use. Recycling of clippings can save as much as two pounds of nitrogen per

1,000 square feet per year, Drs. Peacock and Blace wrote in *Highlights in Soil Science*.

Turfgrass clippings need not be collected and removed if less than 30 to 40 percent of the leaf tissue is cut at each mowing, they continued. And recycling of the clippings can reduce maintenance requirements and labor costs by eliminating the time required to collect clippings, as well as cost for bags and trash disposal.

Don't bag it, and save yourself a bundle, the doctors suggest.



from page 27

that extends from waist to ground and a nozzle with 360-degree rotation for directing its 125 mph gusts. The J-88 is a push-type unit that rotates 270 degrees with air velocities of 225 mph.

Circle No. 204 on Reader Inquiry Card

BEFORE WE DEVELOPED THESE PROBLEM-SOLVING TURFGRASS MIXTURES, WE MARCHED THROUGH ACRES AND ACRES OF PROBLEMS.

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Two herbicides get EPA okay

Team and XL herbicides, both produced by Elanco Products, have received registrations from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Team's registration is for control of crabgrass, goosegrass and other weed grasses in cool season turf. Team provides long-lasting control, including significantly better control of late-germinating annual grasses. It will be available in limited quantities in 1985 for evaluation by golf course superintendents.

XL is a preemergence herbicide with registration for weed control of annual grass in warm season turf. Only one application is needed prior to weed germination. It is available this year at a price about 25 percent less than other premium long-lasting products, Elanco claims.

Circle No. 205 on Reader Inquiry Card



Trailers perfect for lawn mowers

Redi-Haul trailers recently introduced the versatile Handy Hauler, which is perfect for transporting lawn mowers and lawn tractors.

The Handy Hauler features a



four-foot-wide by eight-foot-long deck and a 40-inch-wide ramp. Each of three models comes with lights, fenders, 1 1/8-inch coupler and safety chains.

The Handy Hauler comes in three sizes: 800-pound payload, 1,000-pound payload and 1,300-pound payload.

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LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

JUNE 1985

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A LOOK BACK

Five years ago

New York City was named the top lawn care market in the nation by LCI. The next four were Los Angeles-Long Beach, Chicago, Philadelphia-New Jersey and Detroit.

Dr. John F. Shoulders retired after 28 years on the turfgrass faculty at Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University, where he continues as professor emeritus.

Turfgrass Management was published by Dr. Al Turgeon of Texas A&M University.

Two years ago

ChemLawn expanded its television advertising from 12 markets to 32. Of the \$11.7 million the company pumped into advertising that year, 20 percent (about \$2.3 million) went to television.

James Watson, vice-president of The Toro Co., received the Distinguished Service Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Peter Selmer Loft, chairman of the board of Loft Seed, passed away after a two-year illness.

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THE LAST WORD



On human laziness...

"To err is human..." and so it has always been. But how should you deal with a misunderstanding or mistake between your company and a customer?

Improved communication systems have made things more impersonal. So much that customers often feel as though they're dealing with a machine instead of a person. Mistakes and

misunderstandings should be dealt with quickly and personally in order to keep the good reputation of LCOs in general and the company in specific.

But human laziness abounds as much as human error. Such is the case of a company up north.

This area manager seems to have a real problem. His com-

pany must make a lot of mistakes, since he uses a computerized form letter to "apologize" for his company's mistakes—almost a "fill-in-the-blank" kind of letter.

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An article in April's issue of LAWN CARE INDUSTRY said that 15 to 50 percent of clients sought another LCO for reasons of dissatisfaction each year. Can the industry afford that statistic?

When a mistake is made, a company should go out of their way to correct it by personally communicating with the customer as quickly as possible.

Don't be like the above company, afraid to admit they Have Made A Mistake in person. Take care of it, and keep future work of high quality.

Carla Steen

Carla Steen
Assistant Editor

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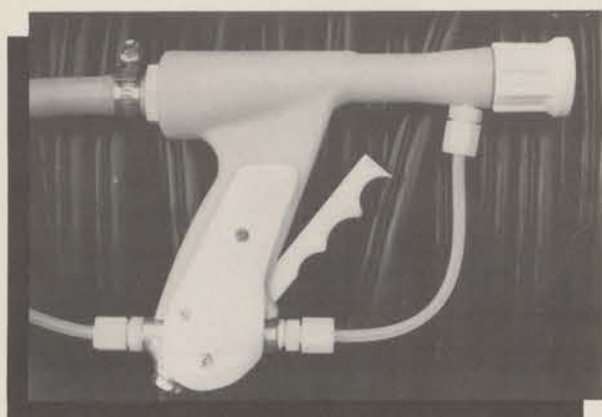


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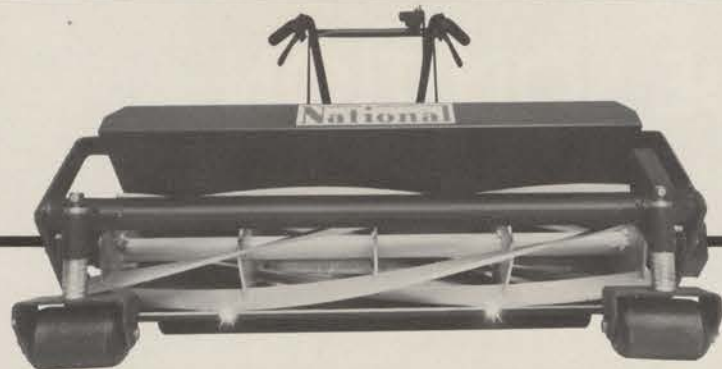
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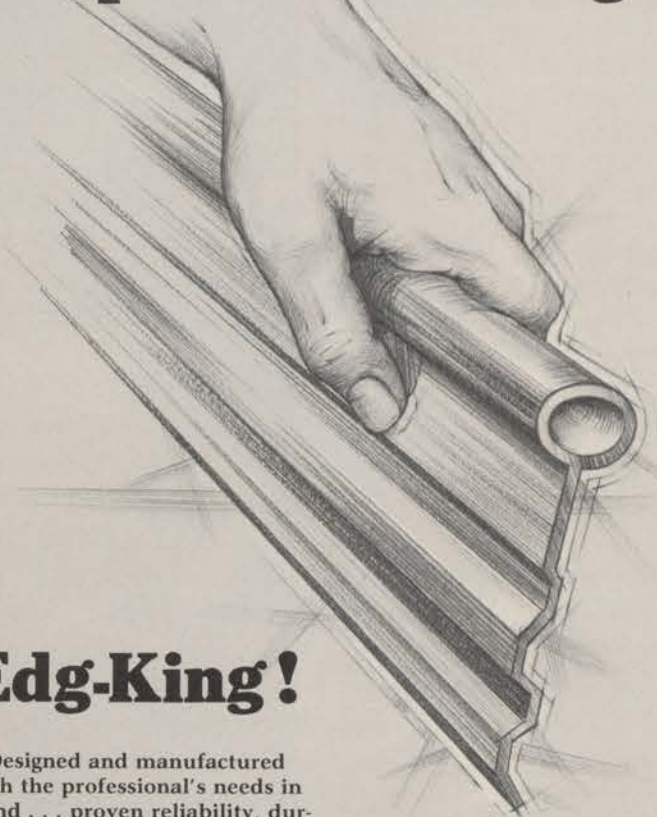
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Oak Brook, IL 60521

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Circle No. 124 on Reader Inquiry Card



Seeding REBEL in late September

Only seven weeks after seeding, REBEL provides a rich carpet of dense, fine-leaved turf on Washington D.C.'s Congressional Country Club, Bill Black, Greens and Grounds Chairman.



Proven performance makes **Rebel** number one.

Rebel
TURF TYPE TALL FESCUE

University tests across the country have proven most tall fescues have some good qualities; but in overall performance Rebel beats them all.

1982 Turfgrass Quality Ratings for Tall Fescue Varieties Tested at Eleven Locations in the United States

Variety	University Test Location, Quality Ratings 1-9; 9 = Best											AVERAGE
	NE	KS	MO	IL	GA	KY	MD	MS	NC	NJ	VA	
REBEL	6.7	7.7	7.0	5.6	8.2	7.5	6.5	4.8	7.0	7.6	6.8	6.9
Falcon	6.3	7.6	6.8	5.3	7.7	6.9	6.6	4.8	6.2	7.3	6.4	6.5
Olympic	6.3	7.3	—	5.0	8.1	6.5	6.3	4.2	5.8	6.6	6.4	6.3
Clemfine	—	7.2	—	—	7.3	6.3	5.9	4.1	6.3	4.6	5.9	6.0
Galway	—	7.0	—	5.1	7.5	6.0	6.4	4.8	6.1	5.1	5.5	5.9
KY-31	5.1	7.2	5.5	5.3	6.8	6.3	5.2	4.1	5.9	3.6	5.4	5.5

In these trials, turfgrass varieties were evaluated for appearance, establishment and quality of stand, resistance to drought and disease, and mowing qualities. REBEL took top honors in all-around attractiveness and performance:

- Resists heat, drought and disease
- Fine-textured (30% finer-leaved than Kentucky 31)
- Dense stand (188% denser than Kentucky 31)
- Excellent shade tolerance
- Rich color
- Fast establishment

For an all-around, top-performing tall fescue, try REBEL. Test it for yourself.



Lofts Inc.
Bound Brook, NJ 08805
(201) 356-8700 • (800) 526-3890

Lofts/Maryland
Beltsville, MD 20705
(301) 937-9292

Lofts/New England
Arlington, MA 02174
(617) 648-7550

Lofts/Great Western
Albany, OR 97321
(800) 547-4063
(503) 928-3100

Sunbelt Seeds, Inc.
Norcross, GA 30071
(404) 448-9932

LESCO Lawn Care Equipment Lineup



NEW! LESCO Aerator-30

Engineered for continuous use, this durable, low-maintenance machine is easy to maneuver, economical to operate and efficient to use. Saves time, labor and money.

- For deeper penetration, designed so only two spoons are driven into the ground at any one time. Includes 30 half-inch-diameter spoons, five per 10-inch-diameter disc on 5½-inch centers.
- For superior balance, easy transport and convenient loading and unloading, includes two steel castor wheels with pneumatic tires.
- For long life and reliability, equipped with a five-horsepower Briggs & Stratton I/C® engine.
- For operator protection, features extended shielding on back of machine.
- For maneuverability and use by operators of various heights, features large curved handles with two sets of grips.
- For easy operation, reel is engaged by on/off lever on handle.

Aerates 9,000 square feet in just 15 minutes!

Item	LESCO No.	Price
LESCO Aerator-30 (open spoon)	008900	\$795.00
LESCO Aerator-30 (closed spoon)	008901	795.00

LESCO Spreader

Built tough and durable to provide accurate application and reliable service.

- For less frequent filling, equipped with a polyethylene hopper that holds up to 80 pounds of material.
- For corrosion protection, features stainless steel axle, impeller shaft and on/off assembly.
- For strength and durability, features reinforced handles and baked-on epoxy finish on handles and frame.
- For ease of lubrication, equipped with zerk fittings.
- For smooth operation, fitted with pneumatic tires.
- For easy transport and impeller protection, features a bumper/handle.

Optional Jet-Action Deflector and Hopper Cover available.

Item	LESCO No.	Price
LESCO Spreader	006000	\$165.00

For complete specifications on quality LESCO equipment, give us a call.

Call toll free. (800) 321-5325
NATIONWIDE

(800) 362-7413
IN OHIO

LESCO

LESCO Sprayer

Available in gasoline or electric model with 100 or 200-gallon tank to fit van or pickup. Versatile and sturdy.

- Skid-mounted for convenient placement.
- For durability and long life, features polyethylene tank.
- For efficiency, gasoline models feature five-horsepower, recoil-start engine which drives a twin-piston 10 GPM (maximum) pump. Engine throttle is adjusted so the normal pump flow rate is 6 GPM. Electric models feature 12 VDC motor-driven, 2.2 GPM positive displacement diaphragm pump.
- For efficient mixing and agitation, equipped with a triple-jet agitator.
- For time and labor savings, features an electric-return hose reel with 400 feet of 3/8-inch hose.
- For application accuracy, equipped with a low-volume spray wand.
- For prolonged pump life, includes an in-line strainer.

Optional accessories available.

Item	LESCO No.	Price
200-Gal. Electric Van Mount	010850	\$1675.00
200-Gal. Electric Pickup Mount	010900	1705.00
200-Gal. Gasoline Van Mount	005664	1775.00
200-Gal. Gasoline Pickup Mount	006354	1805.00
100-Gal. Electric Van Mount	020180	1575.00
100-Gal. Electric Pickup Mount	020181	1605.00
100-Gal. Gasoline Van Mount	012748	1675.00
100-Gal. Gasoline Pickup Mount	009184	1705.00

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