Henton & Chattell and Breakwells sign up to John Deere

John Deere has signed ET Breakwell Ltd and Henton & Chattell Ltd as Commercial and Consumer Equipment dealers in the Midlands. The two dealers had previously been part of the Textron stable.

Between them Breakwells and Henton & Chattell have over 120 years in the grounds care industry and both will now be selling and servicing John Deere’s full line of professional, golf and turf and domestic equipment, including the Roberine and Sabo brands.

“We are delighted to welcome these two leading dealers, with such a strong history of machinery, sales and service to the John Deere network,” said Graham Williams, Deere’s C&CC Division Manager.

“Their experience and established customer base will strengthen our position in the Midlands and enhance our continued growth in the UK grounds care market,” he added.

Breakwell’s employs 65 people across the business, with 22 in service and parts. It will now be covering the West Midlands, Staffordshire and part of Leicestershire for John Deere.

“In order to maintain a high level of after sales service and ensure our continued success in the grounds maintenance industry we see our future with John Deere,” said Len Breakwell, Managing Director.

Henton & Chattell also employs 65 people with 28 in service and parts. Its new territory for John Deere covers Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and part of Leicestershire.

“We have taken a commercial decision that our long-term future lies with John Deere, and its plans for expansion in the grounds care marketplace,” said John Chaloner, Managing Director.

A new ‘yellow patch’ of bent grass

A new problem of bent grass has recently been identified across the UK and Ireland.

Mark Hunt, Product Manager, Headland Amenity Limited, initially spotted the unusual patch problem back in 1998 on a small number of recently established courses and with the support of Headland Amenity began looking into the problem.

During the next two summers, more courses began to show up the symptom extending across England and Ireland. With the assistance ofCropcare, Headland’s Irish distribution partners were taken and analysis begun.

“It became apparent during that period that the problem didn’t fit a specific recognised turfgrass pathogen and it also did not resemble a particular turfgrass disease, a situation that led to a number of ‘dead ends’ and inevitable frustration,” said Mark.

Towards the end of last summer, Dr Kate Entwistle, The Turf Disease Centre, UK, was called in to identify its cause, but because of its period of activity, it wasn’t until this summer using fresh samples from the UK and Ireland that progress was made.

Kate was, however, able to discuss the problem with Dr Joe Vargas Jr., Michigan State University, during last year’s Myerscough Turf Conference, since Joe had been independently asked to become involved in the identification of this peculiar phenomenon. Work is still ongoing to determine the complete nature of this new condition, but they have found that the symptoms are definitely associated with the establishment of a root knot nematode of the Meloidogyne genus.

“This is an extremely exciting discovery for us,” explained Kate.

“Have been aware for some time that several types of nematodes increasingly appear to be associated with problems on amenity turf, but this is the first time that I have seen Meloidogyne causing such dramatic symptoms on putting greens in the UK and Ireland.

“We hope to have further details very soon and are looking at publishing an article on the condition in a forthcoming issue of Greenkeeper International,” said Kate.

The problem shows itself as pale green or yellow/green patches or rings which appear around May/June and remain throughout the growing season until they disappear from the putting surface around November/December. Very occasionally does the sward thin or show dead areas within the affected patch.

“We fully appreciate the concerns of the Course Managers presently involved in this investigation with regard to finding a cure for this disfiguring problem. However, we need to be absolutely certain what we are dealing with before we can make any recommendations. Misidentification and incorrect advice at this stage for control could actually exacerbate the problem,” said Kate.

For further information contact Kate Tel: 01256 880246.