Dwindling research funds force firms' hands

Cutbacks in federal funding have colleges across the country scrambling to preserve programs that once seemed a sure thing. In a similar vein, firms are finding that their research efforts are being squeezed by a lack of cash.

Dr. Hank Wilkinson and his wife, Tina, at Jacklin Seed Co. in June.

The message was clear: Don't count on academia to provide the amount of research it has in the past. If the golf industry is to move forward, its members must take the research lead, because colleges and universities simply can't afford it any longer.

Yet it's not quite that simple. With money at a premium, research will follow the dollars. In other words, cash-strapped research facilities will be more likely to conduct special interest testing at the behest of, say, Company X.

The way Wilkinson sees it, there are three kinds of research: 1) Practical research, which solves a problem. 2) Demonstrative research, which proves a point. And 3) Futuristic research, which focuses on "the cutting edge" rather than "the practical." "Companies are far more likely, at this point, to fund 1) and 2) —
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Golf industry is not insulated from 'society of bizarrity'

People in the golf industry are glad to point out during times of recession that golf is recession-proof — or at least recession-resistant. Golf play goes up when employment rates go down. But is the golf industry insulated from insanity? Before dismissing this question out of hand, take a closer look.

We are living in what I call a "society of bizarrity." I know that isn't a word, but it is based on the word "bizarre," so please hang in there with me."

Recall the aftermath of the verdict setting free the police officers accused of beating Rodney King. Riots ensued in Los Angeles, Atlanta, Minneapolis, even Montreal. What the poor business owners in Los Angeles had to do with the acquittal of the policemen was beyond anyone's imagination. But their businesses got trashed. I thought, that is why I started pondering the golf industry's insulation — or lack thereof — against insanity in a society of bizarrity.

When Dr. Beard stated in the abstract of his paper to the GCSAA conference that "mesh element inclusion in high density turfgrass research in the Department of Plant Pathology/Agronomy..."

The important difference between Mr. Sifers' comments and those of Mr. Hurdzan is that whilst Mr. Hurdzan was quite reasonable providing his opinions, Mr. Sifers was responding to direct questions by providing factual statements on the major research program conducted at Texas A&M University from 1985 to date (i.e. seven years).

When Mr. Sifers stated that moisture content in the mesh elements rootzone was always slightly higher than in an equivalent non-mesh rootzone, he was referring to extensive studies undertaken over a two-year period.

Measurements were taken at four seasonal periods, at three soil depths on a large number of randomly arranged trials. The increased soil moisture content is, therefore, a fact and not a "claim" as stated in your quote from Mr. Hurdzan.

In a similar way, statements regarding reduced divot size and enhanced recovery rates due to the mesh elements inclusion are also based on extensive research data.

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