Seed Report

**PVP legislation pending; VNS issue divisive**

**By Mark Leslie**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The national and international negotiations over Plant Variety Protection (PVP) that have sharply divided the American seed industry should be decided later this month, according to sources inside and outside the government.

"We're trying to bring the U.S. law into conformity with the new UPOV [International Union for the Protection of Varieties] treaty," said U.S. Department of Agriculture Plant Variety Protection Office Commissioner Ken Evans said.

The U.S. PVP law was first adopted in 1970 and UPOV was first passed by 21 countries in 1978. UPOV was rewritten in 1991. To be a signatory, the United States must come into compliance with that 1991 version.

The purpose of UPOV is to ensure quality control; truth in advertising, by letting consumers know what they're buying; and enforcement, ensuring the seed in a bag is exactly what its label says. Evans explained that at the request of Sen. Bob Kerry, D-Ne., his department last fall drafted new PVP legislation.

"We hope for passage of a new PVP act by the time of our convention — June 20," said Leslie Cahill, vice president of governmental affairs for the American Seed Trade Association here.

With a Senate vote expected to be in hand in May, "my understanding is that by the end of June, it will be introduced into the House as well," said Tom Salt, plant variety protection examiner with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Once the U.S. law passes the Senate and House, then the Senate can take the final step of ratifying the UPOV treaty.

"To enforce the treaty at least five member countries have to submit legislation to the House as well," said Tom Salt, plant variety protection examiner with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

"In areas where we don't have dealers, we'll sell direct. We have an 800 number [1-800-883-2887]." Two English firms — Flymo and Allen — have cornered the market on hover mowers for years. But Hughes is convinced there is market share to be had.

"I spent three months finding out whether there was a market," he said. "It was my impression that Flymo had pulled back to England, and there was demand here. If we made a good hover mower, people would buy it." He did about 450 units domestically last year. We want to get to 5,000 units a year.

**Madrid Golf Show set for November**

MADRID — The sixth Madrid International Golf Show 1994, the main golf exhibition in southern Europe, will be held here at the Casa de Campo Exhibition Centre from Nov. 17-20.

This commercial/industry show drew 13,300 people last year, including 1,200 trade visitors, according to show organizer GEASA S.L. Exhibitors can purchase a 12-meter by 12-meter booth space for 214,200 Spanish pesetas (or US$1,565 plus VAT).

The Madrid International Golf Show is run in concert with the fourth annual Golf Technical Workshop, Nov. 17-19.

The superintendents session will be run collaboratively by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and the Spanish Greenkeepers Association.

The session for club managers will be run jointly by the Spanish Club Managers Association and the Club Managers Association of America.

For more information, contact Emmanuel Dubos at 341-350-1564, or fax at 341-350-6866.

**Kirby Markers sold to Witco Industries**

CARMEL, Calif. — Jack Kirby, inventor and chairman of the board of Kirby Markers, Inc., has announced he has sold his company to Witco Industries, a Delaware Corporation. The terms of the sale were not disclosed.

Witco Industries, Inc. announced it will move the company from here to Carlsbad, Calif., by the end of April. The Kirby Marker System will be manufactured by Plastics Engineering and Development, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary. The company will be located at 6108 Avenida Encinas, Carlsbad, California 92090. The new telephone number will be 1-800-925-4729.

Kirby will remain a consultant to the company, and Sales and Marketing Manager Buster Newton will assume the same position with the new company.