Gordon; and turf distributor representatives. Clayton’s experience includes positions as VP of operations for Perma-Green; director of technical services for the Professional Lawn Care Association of America; turf and ornamental market manager for PBI Gordon; and turf distributor sales representative for Pro Turf Specialties.

**SEARIGHT TO MANAGE SRO-DALLAS**

CORVALLIS, Ore. — Seed Research of Oregon, Inc. has appointed Pat Searight area manager for the Dallas, Texas, operation. He will be responsible for sales of Seed Research’s cool- and warm-season grass seed program in central Texas. Searight has a bachelor’s degree in agronomy with a turfgrass management specialty from Texas A&M. Prior to joining Seed Research, he was an instructor with Texas State Technical College and formerly held several golf course superintendent positions.

**DUFFY MOVES UP AT GOULDS PUMPS**

SENECA FALL, N.Y. — Richard C. Duffy, manager of Water Technologies Group at Goulds Pumps, Inc., has been named staff vice president-corporate development reporting to Thomas C. McDermott, president and chief executive officer. Duffy began his 24-year career in the pump industry with Morris Machine Works of Baldwinsville, N.Y., later acquired by Goulds in 1981. In 1984, he held the position of marketing manager for the Texas Division, in Lubbock, then a similar post for the G&L commercial business at the Water Systems Division here.

**EPA OKS HIGHER RATES FOR ALAMO**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Environmental Protection Agency has registered new, higher rates for Alamo fungicide for applications through pressurized injection equipment. For preventative treatments, six milliliters of Alamo should be used. The new label also recommends a 10-milliliter rate for curative treatments. Alamo is Ciba Turf & Ornamental’s tool for control of oak wilt and Dutch elm disease.

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**NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH**

Rain Bird’s Golf Division has unveiled Maxi for Windows computer-based irrigation control system. Designed to run on Microsoft Windows operating software, Maxi for Windows provides superintendents with a system that is versatile, easy to use and competitively priced. With Maxi for Windows the super can manage all irrigation applications without extensive training, via the Maxi Quick Start initialization and start-up program, which also helps the superintendent build an initial irrigation program. Because the system operates on the Windows program, it can simultaneously manage up to 50 irrigation schedules, generate spreadsheets, compile government-required reports, conduct word-processing functions and plan future irrigation needs. For more information, call Rain Bird at 619-543-3080. For more new products, see page 66.

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**Decision to Pennington; feds pay up**

**By Mark Leslie**

MADISON, Ga. — A struggle that dragged on for six years has come to a close, with the U.S. Treasury reimbursing Pennington Enterprises, Inc. $250,000 for losses stemming from a government blunder.

“Vindication was uppermost in my mind. We were not at fault,” said the seed company’s president, Brooks (Sonny) Pennington. “The real sad part is that we taxpayers paid all those government lawyers for six years and then had to pay $250,000 because of one man’s mistake.”

The snafu Pennington referred to involved U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors allowing 2 million pounds of weed-infected Argentine tall fescue grass seed into the country on Nov. 17, 1988. Unknown to Pennington and six other American companies, the shipment contained a noxious weed, serrated tussock. By the time the USDA demanded the

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**Packaging prices continue to rise**

**By Lynn Grooms**

If you have purchased multimail bags or polyethylene film recently, you have noticed some dramatic price increases. And, it’s not over yet, according to sources in the packaging business.

Harley Sasse of Greif Bros. in Rosemount, Minn., reports that major paper manufacturers have announced another price increase of $50/ton. Sasse noted that seed bag prices have already increased 20 percent over last year.

Given the current high demand for paper, including liner-board used to make fiber drums and corrugated box packing, not to mention the near capacity production situation for manufacturers, Sasse

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**GCSAA bags Asian exhibit sales duties**

**By Hal Phillips**

SINGAPORE — In keeping with the “America First” campaign it initiated some 18 months ago, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) has seized the exhibit sales portion of its relationship with Golf Asia, the industry trade show held here annually.

The superintendents association’s former partners in Golf Asia—Singapore-based Connex Private Ltd. and Cleveland, Ohio-based International Management Group (IMG) — will continue to manage the trade show. IMG’s Chris Roderick reported that 60 to 70 percent of this year’s exhibitors have already reserved booth space for Golf Asia ’96.

The superintendents association will, however, continue to conduct Golf Asia’s education sessions, said GCSAA Chief Executive Officer Steve Mona, who added that his organization broke even financially on Golf Asia ’95, held March 23-26.

“We won’t sell space at all next year,” Mona explained. “It’s really pretty simple: We’re going to concentrate on some specific mandates. We want to apply ourselves to those goals. Our involvement on the exhibit side of an international show doesn’t meet that mandate.”

“There are no hard feelings between us and IMG. We’ve been discussing this for some time. We will have our own booth there [Golf Asia ’96]. We will be present, run the education sessions and man the booth. We’re going to concentrate on pro

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**A NEW HOME FOR BARENBRUG USA**

TANGENT, Ore. — Barenbrug USA has entered the first stage of construction on its new facility. Located on approximately 13 acres of land just south of the Highway 34 overpass on 99W here, the finished product will eventually accommodate more than 100,000 square feet of production, warehouse, shipping and office space. As you can see, the exterior design will incorporate the worldwide Barenbrug colors and logo. Completion of the entire project is projected in about 18 months. In other Barenbrug news, Michael Thomas has been chosen to fill the position of field representative.

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**SUPPLIER BUSINESS**

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Seed growers organize bargaining association

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dealers see the PRBA initiative as tampering with the principles of supply and demand. Besides, they argue, a few good crops and dealers will be paying 45 cents per pound for seed worth 43 cents or less. "The growers are producing too much perennial ryegrass—that's the problem here," said Robinson, president of Corvallis-based Seed Research of Oregon. "As a group, what they should be doing is controlling the acreage of production. Take the two words away, and there is the problem."

At a recent meeting of the Independent Seed Growers Association, Robinson said he believed no more than 40 percent of the acreage will be used up, but it was unclear whether the cost of growing ryegrass in the long term. Instead—and we see this all the time—if the price of annual ryegrass goes up one year, they all plant annual ryegrass. Then the price goes down.

Robert Richardson, vice president and general manager of Great Western Seed, a wholly owned subsidiary of Lofts, Inc., agreed that oversupply is a problem. But he noted that bans on field burning and controlling the acreage of production failed to work.

"As a group, what they should be doing is growing a wheat crop. If they could put in a wheat crop, the market would be better. But it's not like they could control the price of their product. It's about the market price."

Richardson explained that the wild card in the real-world economic debate. Carnes was the best option. But their costs are too high. "We have to see how flexible the growers are."

In either case, the growers, seed companies are an extremely independent bunch. Consequently, agreements of the PRBA tend to vary. "We have to see how flexible the growers can be."

"We need to support the flegching organization, many companies contend the PRBA is not about bargaining; it's about arbitrary price fixing. Further, seed dealers point out that a great many growers — traditional farmers — are not participating in the PRBA. Robinson said he believes no more than 40 percent of growers have signed on. Carnes said he has 30 percent of the contracted acreage.

In either case, like the growers, seed companies are an extremely independent bunch. Consequently, agreements of the PRBA tend to vary.

"We need to see how flexible the growers can be in low markets," said Rich Underwood, president of International Seed. "If we decide we need to decrease the subsidy and the growers aren't listening, we can't control production. We have high and low markets in agriculture, and we'll see how they handle it."

"From a marketing standpoint, if I know what my costs are going to be, [a floor price] makes my job easier. And if I know what everyone else's costs are going to be, it creates a level playing field. I can put on my margin and away we go."

With the new, higher floor price now in place and ryegrass predicted to be scarce this fall, will seed companies simply pass on price increases to their buyers, i.e. superintendents?

"Absolutely," said Carnes, "Seed companies can get their margins up. And there isn't one of them who doesn't want to drive up their margins... Golf courses have to be green. The main cost of keeping it green is fertilizers and chemicals, not seed."

Richardson agrees. "The ultimate result is, superintendents will have to start budgeting more money for seed. I bet golf courses are looking at 10 cents extra per pound. And it should kick in this July, August or September."

"If we raise prices, the superintendents will simply use less seed. He's got a budget. I've seen this before. The superintendents will cut back on his usage."

Seed companies are taking price hits on both ends of the market, said Richardson. While the growers are taking margin away at one end, golf course buying groups — like those organized by larger management companies and the National Golf Course Owners Association — have negotiated lower seed prices at the other end of the spectrum.

"They're getting squeezed," said Richardson, "and they have to pass the costs along."

Further, the PRBA didn't materialize out of thin air, said Underwood. "I think the dealers may have brought this situation on themselves by trying to sell cheaper than each other," he said. "And instead of taking those costs out of their own margins, they tried to take it from the grower."

Robinson said he wishes the Perennial Ryegrass Bargaining Association would pay more attention to the third word in its title: "They call it a bargaining association, but they just tell us what they want," he said. "If the seed companies did that as a group, they'd call it anti-trust... A lot of seed companies are looking for other areas to grow grass seed. They're looking at New Zealand and Canada."

Foreign growing markets are an option, but it's unclear whether the cost of freight would scuttle attempts to save on the production end. The situation is slightly more promising for dealers in Canada where the dollar has fallen along with America's. However, if Canadian currency rebounds, seed companies will find themselves right back where they started — struggling with shrinking margins.

Other bargaining associations have come and gone in the Willamette Valley, but never has one held together this long. And none has been so well positioned. "Their timing has been perfect," said Richardson. "We've had excellent fall demand. We've had excellent spring demand. The fall will be very busy."

"Companies have a choice of whether to cooperate with the bargaining association. Most of these growers grow for two or three companies at a minimum... If company A says it will go along, their stuff will get cleaned first. If company B says no, they'll probably have to wait their turn."