Here's the poop: Fertilizer business is really hopping

You only need to hit me over the head three, maybe four times before I begin to sense something is afoot. I speak of the fertilizer industry, where big things are happening. To wit:

• We recently met west when Pursell Industries of Sylacauga, Ala., entered into an alliance with J.R. Simplot of Pocatello, Idaho, to manufacture fertilizers for the turfgrass, nursery, consumer and agriculture markets. Pursell, best known for its controlled-release product, Polyon, has supplied these fertilizers to Simplot for 10 years. Simplot is known for its phosphorus fertilizers marketed under the Best and Apex labels, aimed at Simplot for 10 years. Simplot is known for its phosphate

J.R. Simplot

• With new management, manufacturing arrangements, public

retail markets. This new agreement makes both firms national...somewhat to the turf industry, but mostly to agricultural and retail markets. This new agreement makes both firms nationalized...

• Vigoro Corp., which has overhauled its ParEx brand line with new management, manufacturing arrangements, public store, and turfgrass market emphasis. "I think you're being kind if you say there has been a decline in the impact of ParEx over the past two years," said Ron Gagne, Vigoro's new vice president and general manager of the firm's Professional Products Unit. "We have created a separate division with separate manufacturing facilities for the turf business. That explains some of the reorganization." Gagne comes to Vigoro from competitor O.M. Scott. Indeed, Gagne reports to another former Scott employee, Senior Vice President Ken Holbrook, prompting a few industry wags to call the new regime, "O.M. Vigoro." Alas, Vigoro has also hired a new chief financial officer for its Pro unit, Jay Ferguson, and he's not from Marysville, Ohio. He's a 20-year veteran of General Electric. Look for Vigoro to debut its new slow-release nitrogen fertilizer, IBU, early next year. Also look for Vigoro to concentrate on selling to the management companies with larger course portfolios.

• When it comes to models, you could do worse than O.M. Scott, the fertilizer giant which continues to capitalize on its double brand equity. Consumers know Scott, as do superintendent.

Scott's title sponsorship of the Senior PGA Tour's "The Star Ship Enterprise," going places where no one has ever gone before." Fast-forward that film, please, to the new series. Yes. That's it: "Fertilous Ship Enterprise, taking to the air on places that it has never gone before." Can you imagine Fred founder of "Fertilous Enterprise...? I can... almost. Because it is true: Even this late in history, citizens of Golf Nation are taking the game to parts of this earth not even those Scots of Old had introduced it.

No, not everyone in the world plays golf. In fact, not everyone even knows what the world golf is. In some places folks are just happy if they know what food is; their minds are otherwise occupied with this game. For them, it could be far more than a game. It could be food in their mouths.

In the Dominican Republic, golf course architect Pete Dye is the Man Who Could Be King. The Teeth of the Dog and Lines courses he designed at Casa de Campo, built in 1971 and 1976, have brought employment to many. Jobs, jobs, jobs. They are as sport, sport, sport. We just need a few more crownshead above Golf Ship Enterprise. There were heroes of the past who hot-traveled in the world, but now there are future golfers. All of those golfers barren of his golf. His mission was twofold: visit family and talk about golf's possibilities in that country with Juliusz Sochan, deputy director of the Department of Interna-

Progressive


tion of what I perceive to be an extremely important advance in environmental management. The area's water supply is very high percolation rates and, so far, very high percolation rates and, so far, extremely important to properly calcine a material. Profile is double-calcined, while Ilsoite and X Possible are calcined once. Also, because of the difference in base materials, Profile will increase 

CEC, while the diatomaceous products will not. Soil pH is also affected differently, due to pH differentials between the base materials.

Lastly, I would like to comment on Ed Seay's statement regarding the elimination of rock and tile. This is certainly a possibility with the increased flexibility of material that poros ceramics provide, but it would not apply in all cases. Existing soil types and climatic conditions must be factored in before making this type of decision.

We should remember, however, that some of the most outstanding, in all countries, have no sub-surface drainage. They exist on some of the finest old golf courses and were built long before the USGA concept was introduced. The Denver.

Country Club, where I was once the superintendent, is a prime example.

It is my hope that the industry will not look at porous ceramics, per se, as simply a new product in the marketplace. The emerging technology surrounding these materials is quite new and development is understood and intelligently applied in the golf and sport turf industries. The result will be better golf, safer fields and more environmentally sound turf.

Lou Haines, director Technical Operations Soils Management Technology

SCHOOL POLICY?

TO THE EDITOR

I certainly enjoyed reading the articles about porous ceramics in the September issue. It is most gratifying to know that the industry is beginning to take notice of this potential and to be aware of an extremely important advance in soils management and root-zone engineering. I would like to offer some clarification in a few areas that were addressed in the article, if I may.

I think it is important to state that porous ceramics and organisms are not necessarily in competition with each other. They may, in fact, be complementary in many instances. In some sands, porous ceramics may be all that is required. In others, it is desirable to include both types of materials in order to achieve the most ideal balance. The goal is to create a root-zone mix that has excellent water-holding characteristics while maintaining very high percolation rates and to provide a "vascular system" to accommodate both objectives.

Porous ceramics offer the advantage of being able to change due to biodegradation. Another comment centered around the differences between "calcite and clay" vs. diatomaceous earths. The proper term is calcined clay, also calcined diatomaceous earth. The calcining process is the firing process, which renders the material physically and chemically stable. By definition, calcining is heating a material up to, but just short of, the melting point. The amount of time and the exact temperatures are extremely important to properly calcine a material. Profile is double-calcined, while Ilsoite and X Possible are calcined once. Also, because of the difference in base materials, Profile will increase CEC, while the diatomaceous products will not. Soil pH is also affected differently, due to pH differentials between the base materials.

Letter:

Dear Editor:

I certainly enjoyed reading the articles about porous ceramics in the September issue. It is most gratifying to know that the industry is beginning to take notice of this potential and to be aware of an extremely important advance in soils management and root-zone engineering. I would like to offer some clarification in a few areas that were addressed in the article, if I may.

I think it is important to state that porous ceramics and organisms are not necessarily in competition with each other. They may, in fact, be complementary in many instances. In some sands, porous ceramics may be all that is required. In others, it is desirable to include both types of materials in order to achieve the most ideal balance. The goal is to create a root-zone mix that has excellent water-holding characteristics while maintaining very high percolation rates and to provide a "vascular system" to accommodate both objectives.

Porous ceramics offer the advantage of being able to change due to biodegradation. Another comment centered around the differences between "calcite and clay" vs. diatomaceous earths. The proper term is calcined clay, also calcined diatomaceous earth. The calcining process is the firing process, which renders the material physically and chemically stable. By definition, calcining is heating a material up to, but just short of, the melting point. The amount of time and the exact temperatures are extremely important to properly calcine a material. Profile is double-calcined, while Ilsoite and X Possible are calcined once. Also, because of the difference in base materials, Profile will increase CEC, while the diatomaceous products will not. Soil pH is also affected differently, due to pH differentials between the base materials.

Lastly, I would like to comment on Ed Seay's statement regarding the elimination of rock and tile. This is certainly a possibility with the increased flexibility of material that poros ceramics provide, but it would not apply in all cases. Existing soil types and climatic conditions must be factored in before making this type of decision.

We should remember, however, that some of the most outstanding, in all countries, have no sub-surface drainage. They exist on some of the finest old golf courses and were built long before the USGA concept was introduced. The Denver.

Country Club, where I was once the superintendent, is a prime example.

It is my hope that the industry will not look at porous ceramics, per se, as simply a new product in the marketplace. The emerging technology surrounding these materials is quite new and development is understood and intelligently applied in the golf and sport turf industries. The result will be better golf, safer fields and more environmentally sound turf.

Lou Haines, director Technical Operations Soils Management Technology

Golf Division

Patrick's Speech

Today's topic is the golf course. We would like to debate the golf course coming to the beautiful Son 190 Valley. This would be a problem because they will tear down the trees and wreak the environment. Animals homes will be destroyed and many new drunk drivers will fill the streets. The air will be filled with pollution from the cars and new buildings that will be built. Because of the pollution, people will get sick and possibly die, basically what we're trying to tell you is we want to keep this beautiful land from turning into L.A. Thank you.