**Toro commits to training**

New facility is next step toward creating "total solution" ideal

**By MICHAEL LEVANS**

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — Marking its biggest commitment to training and equipment support to date, the Toro Company will open a 5,800-square-foot training facility designed for customers, distributors and Toro employees this fall.

The facility, located at its Bloomington headquarters, houses two classrooms, four lift-equipped service bays, as well as video conference and audio-visual capabilities.

The company said the facility is its next step in building a "total-solution approach" for its customer base.

"This gives us the physical facility we've needed to augment the training we've been doing in the field," said Don St. Dennis, Toro's director of public relations.

"We're [Toro] in a unique position in terms of services we can offer. We have irrigation and equipment, but we also get involved with the architects and can advise on the grow-in and fertilization. So we see the information training as an extension of that work in order to help our customers manage their facility."

Training curricula, to be held in week-long units, will be taught by Toro personnel and will consist of courses designed to meet certification requirements for professional organizations and help attendees earn continuing education credits.

"Curriculum will be devoted to our commercial turf products and will focus on basic hydraulics, electrical systems, troubleshooting and preventive maintenance, among others," said Rich Smith, Toro's service training manager. "These courses will be devoted to the golf and commercial landscape industry," Smith said.

Classroom lab areas and service bays

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**CYANAMID’S ROWE HEADS MIDWEST**

PARSIPPANY, N.J. — Herbicide and insecticide manufacturer American Cyanamid Company announced that Kit Rowe is now midwestern territory manager for the company’s Turf and Ornamental Products Group and Pest Control Products Group. Rowe’s territory includes Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, western Pennsylvania and Kentucky. His office will be located in Columbus, Ohio. Rowe joined Cyanamid in 1995 as territory manager in the mid-Atlantic states. His territory included Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, southern New Jersey, southeastern Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

**SCHUMACHER JOINS JACKLIN**

POST FALLS, Idaho — Derek Schumacher has joined Jacklin Seed Company as a grower field representative for Jacklin’s Oregon operation. Schumacher’s responsibilities will be placing and contracting Tall Festuca and Perennial Rygrass proprietary varieties for Jacklin Seed Company and Medal- ist America. He will focus on field consulting with growers assuring quality control from the grower to the customer. He re- ceived a Bachelor of Science degree in Crop and Soil Science from Oregon State University in March 1997, and spent summers prior to coming to Jacklin Seed working for Doerfler Farms Inc. in Aumsville, Ore.

**EXCELSIOR’S JONES GOES WEST**

ARLINGTON, Texas — American Excelsior Co. has appointed Larry Jones western sales manager for its Earth Science Division. Jones recently joined American Excelsior from Weyerhaeuser Engineered Fiber Division. In his new position, Jones will be responsible for the sales and marketing of the company’s erosion control products in 15 western states. He will supervise six sales/territory managers and develop distribution channels through American Excelsior’s branch offices, selling direct to contractors and through selected distributors.

**Lofts acquires Sunbelt, gains 100% control**

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Lofts Seeds Inc. has completed its acquisition of Sunbelt Seeds, Inc., a wholesale grass and fertilizer distributor located in Norcross, Ga.

"Lofts already had 50-percent ownership in Sunbelt," said Neil Myers, Lofts’ spokesperson. "We felt it was a good move to establish 100-percent ownership since Sunbelt is one of the largest distributors in the Southeast."

"This was a natural outgrowth of our Sunbelt’s Farmette program, which is a great opportunity to grow our business," said Tom Jones, chief executive officer.

"With environmental issues revolving around nearly every activity in the maintenance shed, Lofts said it’s hoping that its system will strike a resonant chord with eco-savvy superintendents.

"We are very excited with this acquisition because it will enhance our capabilities and services for our existing customers and opens new market opportunities," said Richard Budd, Lofts’ chief executive officer.

Lofts operates branches in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Ohio, North Carolina and Oregon and markets turfgrass seed internationally.