**MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS**

- Agrotech 2000 joins with Organica

PLAINSBORO, N.J. — Agro-Tech 2000, a developer and marketer of environmentally-friendly products for the golf course market, has merged with Organica, Inc., a Great Neck, N.Y.-based biotechnology company specializing in microbial-based products that offer safe alternatives to many pesticides based on synthetic chemicals. Agro-Tech 2000 will retain its name, and continue to introduce new environmentally sensitive products for golf course, sports turf, and landscape applications. The products are designed to reduce chemical usage, improve turf conditions, and help reduce maintenance requirements for professional turf managers and horticulturists. Management, Continued on page 54

- Earth Works purchased by R.F. Morse

WEST WAREHAM, Mass. — R.F. Morse & Son, Inc., (RFM) supplier to the turf profession in New England since 1969, has acquired Earth Works, Inc., Soil Restoration Specialists based in Old Greenwich, Conn. Richard Canning, president of RFM noted this strategic move will expand and enhance the ability of RFM to better serve golf courses in the New York/New Jersey area with services such as soil restoration, custom overseeding, Hydroject treatments, fertilization, along with other important turf management services. Since 1988, Earth Works, Inc. (EW) has provided Continued on page 54

**NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH**

Dairon S.A., the European-based developer of soil renovation systems, has made its equipment available to U.S. markets for the first time. The company's Rotaclay product line includes a wide range of heavy duty and compact soil cultivation, leveling and clearing models, as well as several varieties of overseeders and combo-seeders, which can be adapted to most standard tractors. Utilizing unique reverse rotation technology, the PTO-driven Rotaclay machines cultivate the soil, bury stones and other debris, turn under grass and create a clean, smooth surface that is perfect for seed germination. According to Charles Otto, head of Emrex, Inc., the North American distributor for the entire Rotaclay product line, dealers are currently being recruited to represent the equipment across the United States, with many territories still available. For more information, call 717-288-9360. For more new products see pages 32 and 58.

**BRIEFS**

- **TORO ACQUIRES HARIDGE FOR $119M**
  BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — The Toro Co. has completed the acquisition of James Hardie Irrigation Group (JID), from James Hardie Limited of Australia. The purchase price of approximately $119 million will be initially financed with temporary bank debt. The purchase is expected to have a modest dilutive effect on earnings per share during the first year.

- **WINTER HAVEN, Fla.** — Steven Chirip has been appointed a territory manager, covering Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, Virginia and West Virginia, for the Professional Products group at IMC Vigoro. He is responsible for selling the Par Ex line of fertilizers. Prior to joining IMC Vigoro, Chirip was a territory account manager for United Horticultural Supply. Previously, he was a territory manager for Lebanon Chemical.

- **LANDA JOINS DAKOTA PEAT**
  GRAND FORKS, N.D. — Dakota Peat and Blenders has hired Mark Landa, who will be responsible for satisfying increasing customer demand by expanding the network of authorized Dakota Peat distributors. These dealers will service end users in the turf industry as well as greenhouses, nurseries and other growers. Landa has many years of sales experience in the wholesale hardware industry.

- **CHIRIP REPS VIGORO IN MID-ATLANTIC**
  WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Steven Chirip has been appointed a territory manager, covering Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, Virginia and West Virginia, for the Professional Products group at IMC Vigoro. He is responsible for selling the Par Ex line of fertilizers. Prior to joining IMC Vigoro, Chirip was a territory account manager for United Horticultural Supply. Previously, he was a territory manager for Lebanon Chemical.

- **BIO THERM ESTABLISHES NE OFFICE**
  PETALUMA, Calif. — Alan Andoos has joined BioTherm as regional sales representative establishing support in the eastern region of North America. His many years of industry experience include construction and installation of environmental controls and heating systems. BioTherm's TurfTemp System has the capacity to manipulate the root-zone temperature by circulating hot or cold water to create year-round play on both putting greens and tee boxes.

- **RISE, GCSAA collaborate on speakers program**
  CINCINNATI, Ohio — Three industry associations have joined to initiate an outreach Ambassador Speakers Program. This joint effort is designed to motivate and prepare industry representatives to educate the public about the golf industry's environmental benefits and to address consumer concerns. To kick off the program, RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) conducted an Ambassador Speakers training seminar here on Nov. 16. The pilot program — modeled after the successful American Crop Protection Association program — has enlisted eight golf course superintendents and eight lawn care operators from Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Following training, each Ambassador agreed to give presentations on industry and commission Continued on page 55

**BIOLOGICAL FIRM DISCOVERING THE 'JOYS' OF FIFRA**

BY ALAN B. NICHOLS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Squeezed by the high cost of chemicals and environmental/social pressures to reduce their use, a growing number of golf course superintendents around the country are turning to biocontrol management programs as a supplement to conventional practices.

EcoSoils Systems, Inc., a San Diego technology company, thinks it has solved this challenge with its Bioject Biological Management System (GCN, August). However, EcoSoils must clear a major hurdle — the same hurdle chemical formulators must clear — before it will see its units in many more golf course irrigation systems.

The company's BioReactor, first designed to deliver nitrogen fixing microbes to the soil, must be approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). The company is currently preparing to submit to the agency test protocols and to conduct field testing. EcoSoils hopes to complete and submit tests by spring but, after that, it's anyone's guess how long approval will take. At a minimum, it could take six months.

"If the company is making pesticidal claims, even though the biological agents themselves may be already registered, the process itself must be approved as required by law," said Janet Anderson, director of EPA's biopesticides and pollution prevention division.

Anderson further explained that while microorganisms