New technologies, techniques paving the way...

Dry Sprayer takes overseeding to the next level

**By ANDREW OVERBECK**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—Turf Solutions has developed the Dry Sprayer, a machine using new overseeding technology that dramatically increases the speed, accuracy and germination time over standard overseeding techniques. Adapting air-blast technology commonly found in agricultural equipment, the Dry Sprayer blows seed directly into the turf canopy.

"We have modified this ag-based small crop machine into one suitable for turfgrass applications," said John Wicker, vice president of Turf Solutions, the service arm of local distributor Southeastern Turfgrass Supply. "We built our first machine three years ago and we do the final assembly, modifications and shipping out of Jacksonville."

The Dry Sprayer features a 1,000-pound ground-driven hopper-unit that distributes seed via a clutch-driven paddle to tubes that run down to the 16-foot boom. The seed, which is blown at a speed of 65 mph, then hits diffusers that run along the length of the boom, orienting the seed downward and blowing it into the turf canopy.

"The ground-driven distribution system ensures even application of seed and forces it through the thatch layer providing better soil seed contact," said Wicker. "This leads to better germination, uniform coverage and a reduced outlay of seed by 10 to 15 percent."

The Dry Sprayer is ideally suited for fairway applications and can cover 120 acres in one day. "We typically make two passes with split applications and with three or more machines we can easily do a course in one day," said Wicker. "One machine on a course could easily handle 25 to 30 acres a day, a significant time savings over traditional overseeding.

Metallic Power gets boost for zinc/air power

**By MICHAEL LEVANS**

SAN DIEGO — Metallic Power Ltd. has been awarded a $350,000 contract from the California Energy Commission’s South Coast Air Quality Management District to demonstrate a prototype zinc/air fuel cell-powered riding electric greensmower by January 2000.

The company will collaborate with the Toro Co. on the project.

"With this contract we’re now on a rapid trajectory to develop the zinc/air fuel cell technology," said Jeff Colborn, Metallic Power’s chief executive officer. Founded in 1995, the company has won more than $1.5 million in government research and development contracts.

The zinc/air fuel cell combines zinc pellets, approximately 1 mm in diameter, with oxygen. The reaction takes place in the presence of potassium hydroxide, the liquid electrolyte found in alkaline disposable batteries.

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