Syngenta ready to focus on professional products

By ANDREW OVERBECK

Greensboro, N.C. — In the latest round of consolidation in the agrochemicals industry, Syngenta was formally launched late last year following a year-long merger. The company, which was formed by the combination of the Novartis and AstraZeneca agrochemicals businesses, had pro-forma sales of approximately $57 billion in 1999. Based on revenues, Syngenta will be the number-one player in the turf and ornamental business.

In order to maintain this position, the company will be placing a strong focus on its professional products division, which services the golf course industry.

“One of the advantages of the combined company is that we are no longer a small part of a large pharmaceutical company. We are a pure ag player,” said golf market manager Joseph DiPaola, Ph.D.

The professional products division now has a strong global commitment as well. “Neither company had a very strong commitment to professional products on a global basis,” said Keelan Pulliam, head of professional products. “When Syngenta was designed, a separate group was formed to focus purely on the professional products business. The global teams are responsible for developing strategies and ensuring that new molecules are screened for use in the turf and ornamental market, as well as the other specialty markets.”

SALES AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

By combining the resources of the two parent companies, Syngenta has realized numerous synergies.

“Looking over resources, we have a larger sales force than either Novartis or Zeneca had,” said Don Breeze, head of turf and ornamental products. “On top of that we also have the resources of the whole field biology group that has dedicated professional products people who will support us in research and development.” Syngenta has 24 sales representatives, three sales managers and a five-person technical support team led by technical manager David Roth, Ph.D.

While the sales and technical support staff has increased, the number of sales and marketing managers has been trimmed. “In gaining synergies for the merger of the turf and ornamental groups, we reduced middle-management by 50 percent,” said Pulliam. “We are trying to get efficiencies, but part of the responsibilities that those folks had may reside somewhere else in the organization.”

DISTRIBUTION

Syngenta will also be evaluating its relationships with distributors over the course of the next year. “We are committed to distribution,” said Breeze. “But the

GreenIndustry rolls out Internet-based management software

By ANDREW OVERBECK

WOODBINE, Md. — Steve Cissel, owner of Tree Center Inc., is gearing up to roll out an Internet-based contact management software program and procurement service aimed at improving efficiency in the green industry.

While the venture, GreenIndustry Inc., enters an already packed e-commerce arena, Cissel believes that the software component of the service will set it apart from the competition.

“We are a subscription-based company, not a transaction-based company,” said Cissel. “The Call Book software is an individually customized Internet application that helps manage a contact database. In addition, the project management system keeps each member of the management team informed of all field biology groups.”

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Barcelona organizers set conference program

BARCELONA, Spain — The Barcelona European Golf Show, to be held here Feb. 16-18, will feature more than 20 conferences, workshops, round tables and debates related to the golf market. For the professional section of the program, activities are aimed at analyzing and debating the main challenges of the Spanish and international market. National and international experts, as well as representatives from the private and public sectors, have been invited to participate.

The conference program will cover:
- Analysis of key development stages of a golf complex
- Golf project financing policy in the Spanish market
- Business opportunities in the South American market
- Business opportunities in the Portuguese market
- Quality management applied to golf courses
- Integral management and marketing tools in golf courses and resorts

The round table will cover:
- Golf and the environment
- The Socio-economic value of a golf course

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