



## BRIEFS

### CLAPP TO HEAD FLOWTRONEX

DALLAS — The Rosewood Equipment Co.'s board of directors has appointed Ray Clapp Jr. to succeed the retiring Emil Gram as the president of Flowtronex PSI. Gram stepped down on Aug. 31, but will continue to serve the company in a consulting role. Clapp has worked closely with Flowtronex's management since the Rosewood Corp. purchased a majority interest in the company in 1996. He previously served as the managing director of acquisitions and investments for Rosewood.



Ray Clapp Jr.

### BASF NAMES MOSKAL

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. — Allison Moskal has been appointed the BASF national sales manager for turf, ornamental and pest control group headquartered here. Moskal will be responsible for overseeing field sales operations and will aid in evaluating market potential for new products. Most recently she was the BASF district sales manager for crops on the West Coast.



Allison Moskal

### PTI PROMOTES HEEGARD

SYLACAUGA, Ala. — Dave Heegard has been promoted to vice president of sales and marketing for Pursell Technologies Inc. Heegard will oversee all of PTI's sales and marketing functions and be responsible for sales and profit growth. In his new position, Heegard will be integral in the introduction and marketing of several emerging products, including PRECISE polymer-coated insecticides, herbicides and fungicides.

### PROFILE ADDS MANAGERS

BUFFALO GROVE, Ill. — Profile Products has appointed Larry Jones and Bruce Lichlyter to regional manager positions for the company's erosion control products. Jones will cover the central region of the country from North Dakota to Louisiana, and Lichlyter will cover the western region from Montana to California.

## John Deere unveils products, prototypes at feedback program

By ANDREW OVERBECK

MOLINE, Ill. — John Deere unveiled two new products and several prototype models during its recent feedback program here at its company headquarters in Moline.

This year's feedback program, which took place at Pinnacle Golf Course, hosted approximately 550 superintendents from all 50 states and all over the world including Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Austria and Germany. The program is designed to introduce superintendents to new products and to get feedback on prototypes.

"We have already started tabulating the results," said Chuck Greif, manager of market development for John Deere's golf and turf division. "We want to implement some changes in products before the GCSAA show in February."

Greif pointed out several product changes in this year's models that were made in response to last year's feedback session.

"We added new control arms on the trim mowers, improved seat positioning, added a new suspension seat on the fairway mower as standard equipment, and revamped the clutch in the Turf Gator to

make it quieter," he said.

### NEW MOWERS FOR 2002

The new B-series walk-behind greens mowers were the top product introduction at this year's feedback program. They will replace the A-series mowers and offer 26-inch, 22-inch, and 18-inch widths.

John Deere is building 30 of the B-series units to field test worldwide and then will



More than 500 superintendents had the chance to check out the goods during this year's feedback program.

make final changes before entering production in early 2002. Greif expects the B-series to be available in the spring.

The company also unveiled its first rotary flex deck for roughs. The 72-inch three-unit deck has rear rollers for stripping and has a larger degree of flex than the current 72-inch Lastec model currently available.

### PROTOTYPES ABOUND

In addition to the new products, John Deere

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## Milorganite testing new formulations

By ANDREW OVERBECK

MILWAUKEE, Wis. — In an effort to expand its presence in the golf course marketplace, Milorganite is working on its first new product in 75 years.

The product, which is going by the working name of Komplete, will provide superintendents with an organic fertilizer blend that offers faster green up and improved disease and stress resistance.

"The idea is to look at markets that we are not very strong in and go after those," said Mike Archer, market development and research coordinator. "Golf fairways is one of those areas. Our traditional product is used on greens and tees, but is too expensive in most cases for use on fairways. Plus it doesn't have potash and is not fast acting enough."

### A MORE COMPLETE PRODUCT

Archer said Komplete will still be a natural product, but will add potash and a faster-release nitrogen to

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Mike Archer

## GCSAA refines e-commerce strategy

By ANDREW OVERBECK

LAWRENCE, Kan. — In a series of meetings in mid-August, the GCSAA decided to drop the idea of creating a neutral exchange as a part of its e-commerce initiative and has moved in favor of concentrating solely on the more traditional storefront model.

After a 60-day pilot program, and numerous meetings with suppliers and feedback sessions with superintendents, the association chose to abandon the controversial exchange format that would have charged a transaction fee on every purchase that was made through the site.

"We have simply refined the plan," said chief financial officer Julian Arredondo. "This is not a failure. The pilot was intended to show us what people wanted and what would work. Suppliers got pretty anxious, but we wanted to test it and get feedback. The decision to concentrate on the storefront model was made by the board because they felt like the message was strong and clear that both buyers and sellers wanted to move in that direction."

However, XS Inc., the GCSAA's e-commerce partner, has more experience developing neutral exchange

models, like Xsag.com. Arredondo does not see a problem with this. "They are our technology partner," he said. "The way that they operate in other industries is up to them. The way they operate in this one will be different because we both understand what the industry needs."

### MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY

According to Arredondo, the storefront model gives suppliers and distributors maximum flexibility.

"It will essentially be an electronic version of the existing relationships that are in place between the superintendent and the supplier," he said. "Both sides were more comfortable with that model."

The new site, to be unveiled later this year, will function as a portal to direct superintendents to industry suppliers. There will be storefronts for companies that do not presently have a Web site and links to companies that already have an Internet presence.

"That was the idea from the beginning," Arredondo said. "Many companies have already invested in their own sites. We will offer those who haven't an Internet solution. But everyone has different needs, so flexibility is key."



## EPA approves PTI's PRECISE acephate

SYLACAUGA, Ala. — Pursell Technologies Inc. (PTI) has gained approval from the Environmental Protection Agency for the first polymer-coated insecticide formulated with PRECISE technology.

The patented PRECISE coating technology developed by PTI allows gradual release of pesticides via osmotic diffusion.

The company's first product is an acephate granule that has substantial application flexibility. The product works as either a preventive or curative control for fire ants, mole crickets, sod webworms, cutworms, armyworms and chinch bugs. Research is currently being conducted to determine grub control efficacy.

"The high water solubility of acephate lends itself well to being polymer coated," said Jeff Higgins, vice president of sales and marketing. "We have taken an insecticide that is considered to be short lived in the sprayable form and extended the longevity of the product."

The PRECISE acephate granule product is under limited production at a pilot plant in Sylacauga, but PTI plans to construct a plant to handle production of the entire line of future PRECISE insecticide, fungicide, herbicide and combination products.

"A fungicide such as Metalaxyl is probably the next material we will coat using PRECISE," said Higgins. "Our testing has identified several materials that would be ideal."





## PFG expands, teams with E-Z-GO

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Provident Bank and its subsidiary, Information Leasing Corp. (ILC), is expanding its golf and equipment leasing division, PFG Golf. PFG Golf provides financing solutions including lines-of-credit and lease and debt consolidation programs

for the acquisition of golf-related supplies and equipment such as golf cars, turf maintenance equipment and clubhouse furniture. The company has also formed a strategic alliance with E-Z-GO and will work with clients installing the ProLink GPS system in golf cars.

## John Deere

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Deere is also working on several prototypes and new technologies. Closest to market is the new fairway mower with a turbo-charged engine and new operator station and foot controls. Greif said that model could make it to the market by the end of 2002.

The company's Global Positioning System efforts also at-

tracted the attention of superintendents. One of the GPS programs is geared to the management of equipment fleets via on-board units that transmit information to the shop when service intervals are approaching. The other program is a spray tracking system that monitors and records how much and where chemicals have been sprayed on the course.

Other new concepts presented

at the feedback session included an electric triplex riding greens mower that will eliminate hydraulic leaks, a combination fairway/trim mower for increased flexibility, and a core processor that breaks up and redistributes aeration cores faster and easier.

Greif said the production of the prototype models and technologies will depend on the feedback responses and further market research. ■

## Milorganite

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offer a more complete solution for superintendents. His team is now working on different formulations including a nitrogen-rich 16-1-9; a stress focused 10-1-10; and a more balanced 5-1-5. Archer is experimenting with different nitrogen sources such as urea and ammonium sulfate, nutralene and UMAXX.

"We are conducting research at Purdue University, University of Wisconsin and University of Florida," Archer noted. "We are not locked into these formulations, we are still looking for feedback and will fine tune these as we go."

Milorganite will be doing test marketing of the product next year and will get 1,500 tons of the different Komplete formulations in the hands of superintendents. Contract manufacturers will produce the new line.

Archer does not see the new product as a replacement for the 50,000 tons of traditional Milorganite fertilizer that it makes each year.

"We feel like we have a good customer base for the traditional product. It is a good safe product and causes no salt build up," said Archer. "The new product will be advanced but will have a salt index and will not be as safe to use in high stress or low moisture conditions."

Because Milorganite is a part of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, it has to take any new product development slowly.

"We are both private and public," said Archer. "We have to deal with some rules and regulations as far as funding is concerned. It is slower, but then we are also less prone to make errors by moving too fast."

"The commission that runs the district is aware of what we are doing and has to give their stamp of approval on this project, similar to a board of directors at a private company," he added.

Once the product studies and test marketing are completed next year, Milorganite will make the final decision regarding Komplete. Archer, however, is bullish on the potential for the product.

"It is a good market and one that has not been tested yet," he said. "Companies like Harmony, Nature Safe, and Earthworks have tested the market, and it is ready." ■

## 48th Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show

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