



## BRIEFS

### MCMANUS NAMED TO BECKER UNDERWOOD BOARD

AMES, Iowa — Becker Underwood has named Ian McManus to the its board of directors, which oversees the company's global operations. McManus, who was formerly a member of the executive committee of Aventis CropScience, will be integral in the company's strategic planning and market expansion.



Ian McManus

### TEXTRON PROMOTES CHICKEN

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Textron Golf, Turf and Specialty Products has appointed Dr. Steve Chicken to the position of managing director for Textron Golf, Turf and Specialty Products International, effective immediately. Based in Ipswich, England, Dr. Chicken will manage all international operations in Europe, Africa and the Middle East including: engineering, sales, marketing, customer service and manufacturing. Dr. Chicken will report to TGT&SP president Jon Carlson. Most recently, Dr. Chicken held the position of vice president of engineering for turf products.

### OBERLE JOINS BASF

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. — David J. Oberle has joined BASF professional turf as a senior sales specialist. Oberle will be responsible for sales of BASF professional turf products including Pendulum, Drive, and Image herbicides, in addition to Basamid granular soil fumigant. His territory will cover Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois. A former superintendent, Oberle worked for 12 years at the Scotts Co. as a technical representative and national account manager.



David J. Oberle

### EAST PENN NETS ISO CERTIFICATION

LYON STATION, Pa. — Lead-acid battery maker East Penn Manufacturing Co. has achieved ISO 9001:2000 and QS 9000:1998 certification for its 480-acre complex. The company has also received ISO 14001 Environmental Management System certification.

## Dunn: SRO will 'stay vigilant'

By ANDREW OVERBECK

CORVALLIS, Ore. — When longtime president Mike Robinson stepped down to handle international sales and new product development for Seed Research of Oregon (SRO), general manager Bill Dunn stepped up to run day-to-day operations.

"Mike started the company in 1983 and has managed SRO through its growth," said Dunn, a longtime veteran of the seed



Bill Dunn

industry who worked for Lofts Seed, Zajac Performance Seeds and AgriBioTech, before joining the company in 2000. "He will focus on the international markets but also play a role in new product development."

According to Dunn, SRO will continue to focus on the professional turfgrass market and has a number of new products on the way.

"We have been in the process of converting some of our germplasms and will be offering new and improved varieties in all species," he said. "We are going to stay focused on warm-season seeded bermudagrasses and a large effort will be

placed on the cool-season market."

In addition to two new seeded bermudagrass varieties SR 9500 and SR 9554 that SRO is about to launch, the company is also ready to release three new ryegrasses and one new Kentucky bluegrass variety.

"We have three new ryegrasses that will have limited commercial availability this season," Dunn said. "SR 4420, SR 4220 and Hawkeye feature improved disease resistance, darker colors and denser playing surfaces. We also have two new elite Kentucky bluegrass varieties one of which, SR 2284, will be available on a limited basis this harvest," he continued.

### A CHALLENGING MARKET

As Dunn steps into managing SRO, he is undaunted by an industry that has been challenged recently by both volatile overseeding prices and slowing golf course construction.

"The overseeding market is a competitive market," he said. "The industry is starting to get back into line with supply and demand. We have seen the worst of the ABT oversupply at least in perennial ryegrass. There will be some price increases and price stability will return to

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## Bayer gains FTC approval for Aventis CropScience buyout

WASHINGTON — The Federal Trade Commission granted conditional approval for Bayer's purchase of Aventis CropScience May 30. The FTC approval was the final step in the \$6.4 billion deal that was approved April 17 by the European Commission.

As part of the buyout, regulators are forcing the companies to divest their acetamiprid and fipronil crop insecticides and flucarbazone crop herbicide. Buyers for each product must be found within six months.

The deal marks the end of the road for Aventis CropScience, which was put on the market by its parent company Aventis SA in November 2000. The Bayer buyout was announced in October 2001 following a summer of exclusive talks between the two companies. The combined company will be the number two player in the agrochemical marketplace behind market leader Syngenta AG.



## Becker Underwood aligns MicroBio operating and marketing functions

By ANDREW OVERBECK

AMES, Iowa — In a move to capitalize on its expanding global presence, Becker Underwood has aligned the marketing and operations activities of the Canada and U.K.-based MicroBio Group it acquired in 2000.

"There is a lot of brand equity in MicroBio," said Roger Underwood, CEO. "They are the largest beneficial Nematode producer in the world and it has a strong biopesticide business. But Becker Underwood didn't get any of

that brand equity because many of our customers did not recognize that we owned MicroBio."

By consolidating MicroBio under the Becker Underwood name, Underwood hopes to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness.

"We have torn the wall down, it is no longer us and them," he said. "We will have more global staff meetings and development teams are being put together."

Continued on next page



Roger Underwood

### NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



#### THE BOBCAT T190 TREADS LIGHTLY

The Bobcat T190 Compact Track Loader features improved flotation with 12.6-inch rubber tracks that produce five pounds per square inch of ground pressure. This decreases ground disturbance and allows the unit to be used in wet weather conditions. The T190 is powered by a 56-hp turbo-charged diesel engine and has a 1,900-pound rated operating capacity, a 118.2-inch lift height and auxiliary hydraulic output of 16.7 gpm. For more information, contact [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com).

## Syngenta primed for continued growth

By ANDREW OVERBECK

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Syngenta Professional Products has adjusted its management structure internally to improve operational efficiency and drive growth.

"There is no change in the original structure that was put in place when Syngenta was formed but we have refined the structure to create an organization that had business units aligned around similar end user groupings," said Keelan Pulliam, group head of professional products. "Last year we had three groups and this year we have four. We wanted to get groups that have more similar activities and projects to align marketing efforts."

While business has been dismal on the agriculture side, the professional products division is primed for future growth according to Pulliam.

"On the professional side the markets have grown over the past four years and we are restructuring professional products as a net gainer of people and resources," he said. "To maintain our top position we have to find some new projects, make formulation and packaging improvements and build better information systems."

In order to do this, Syngenta has beefed up its strategic marketing and customer management staffs.

"We are also getting closer with our new soil insecticide thiamethoxam," said Pulliam. "We expect registration from the Environmental Protection Agency in time for the 2003 season."

While Syngenta continues its wait on thiamethoxam, its Touchdown Pro glyphosate product gained EPA approval for forestry and aquatic uses

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GOLF COURSE NEWS



## Advanced Turf Solutions merges with Turf Professionals Choice

FISHERS, Ind. — Advanced Turf Solutions and Turf Professionals Choice, two Indianapolis-area distributors, have merged operations under the Advanced Turf Solutions name. The combined company, which focuses on post-patent chemistry, now serves all of Indiana and Kentucky as well as Southern Ohio.

Alex Cannon is the president of the new company and Dan Dunham is vice president of operations. Vic Garcia, the founder of

Turf Professionals Choice, has ownership in the company and serves on the board of directors. Garcia will continue to service his customers in the field and play other key roles in management.

The company distributes a full line of professional turf maintenance products and golf course accessories. Advanced Turf Solutions is headquartered in Fishers where it has a 28,000-square-foot facility. The company also has a smaller facility in Lexington, Kent.

## Textron focus

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and turf backgrounds. We are taking a fresh look at all of this equipment."

Among the areas being looked at said Vickers are next generation cutting units, alternative power sources, and technology from Textron's other divisions such as Omnicorp and Bell Helicopter.

Vickers' first task will be to streamline Textron's product platforms.

"We will whittle down the number of configurations and go to a minimum number of platforms," he said. "For example, we have duplicate platforms in the triplex mowers but we have to target that while retaining functionality for all the markets."

At the same time, Vickers is also working on new products.

"We have the new LF 1880 fairway mower out there right

now and we will be looking at how we can add a greens mower and a trim mower to that new platform," Vickers said. "We will also be concentrating heavily on walk-behind greens mowers because our competition already has an advantage there. The first phase of a new line of walk-behind greens mowers will be announced later this year."

Textron is also ramping up its testing facility at its 270,000 square-foot factory in Charlotte.

"We will have a 24-hour-a-day track for outdoor durability testing and we are also putting in a par-3 hole that will give us all of the elements of the golf course right there at the factory," said Vickers.

The 125-yard hole will have a 6,000 square-foot green, three different tee boxes and will have sand traps and waste bunkers.

"It will give us the capability to look at different aspects of a development program without having

## Syngenta

Continued from previous page

earlier than scheduled.

"You can now use it as a trim and edge product around ponds and lakes and other bodies of water," Pulliam said.

With Bayer's buyout of Aventis approved, Pulliam re-

*"To maintain our top position we have to find new projects and make formulation improvements."*  
— Keelan Pulliam

mains confident that Syngenta will remain on top in the turf and ornamental market.

"Acquisitions and consolidations and mergers have been a big part of this industry in the last five to seven years and as a supplier you learn to deal with it," he said. "We will continue to be number one in turf and ornamentals after the acquisition."

As part of the Aventis acquisition, European Union officials and the U.S. Federal Trade Commission have forced Bayer to shed several insecticide products (see story on previous page). Pulliam said Syngenta might be looking to pick up the pieces.

"We are always interested in opportunities if they present themselves," said Pulliam. ■

to go to a golf course," Vickers said. "It will also allow customers to try out our new products at the factory." ■

## SRO to remain 'vigilant'

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the market this year as opposed to the incredibly low prices that we saw last year."

Dunn said that he recognizes that many courses have had budgets cut this year, but believes overseeding usage will be about the same as it was last year.

"Some courses may reduce overseeding acreage this year, but I don't think many will forgo overseeding altogether because it is just too risky," he said. "I am not saying that budgets have not come under pressure, but with fewer golfers out there the competition for them will be keener. Courses will find a way [to overseed]."

The construction slowdown doesn't worry Dunn either. "With more renovation work going on we are working on our approach

to smaller projects. Instead of selling 50,000 pounds of seed to one project, it now takes three projects," Dunn said. "So we are stepping up our communication between our tech support agronomists, architects, builders and distributors to try and improve our service on that side."

With Mike Robinson working internationally and on new product development, Dunn is looking forward to continuing SRO's advancement.

"SRO has a good reputation in the business and that is not something you create overnight," said Dunn. "My challenge is to work in a market that is much tougher and to stay vigilant and look for opportunities while working to support the customer and keep them satisfied." ■

## Becker Underwood aligns ops

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The company now has 27 global sales representatives on three continents.

"The market in the United States is continuing to grow as the market trends toward using integrated pest management practices," Underwood said. "The market in Europe is even stronger because the portfolio of traditional pesticides is really small."


Aware that many superintendents are wary of biological solutions, Underwood is putting emphasis on developing real world product tests.

"We put our superintendents hats on when we do this work," he

said. "Often in when there is research going on in a lab there is more 'r' going on than 'd.' Many things work under perfect conditions. But there aren't perfect conditions in the real world. We are working on provable solutions that give the superintendent value."

Going forward, the company has new products in the both the traditional and biopesticide areas that are getting closer to market.


"One is a biopesticide that will provide superintendents another biological option besides traditional insecticides," Underwood said. "But we are still in development and we are summarizing the data." ■




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