McManus named to Becker Underwood board

AMES, Iowa — Becker Underwood has named Ian McManus to 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.

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.

Becker Underwood aligns MicroBio operating and marketing functions

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.

Syngenta primed for continued growth

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

New product of the month

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.
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 Dunn 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, Indiana, where it has a 28,000-square-foot facility. The company also has a smaller facility in Lexington, Kentucky.

Textron focus

Continued from page 1

and turf backgrounds. We are taking a fresh look at all of this equipment,” Vickers said. “We will 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 parl’s 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 to maintain our top position we have to find new projects and make formulation improvements.”

— Keelie Pulliam

SRO to remain ‘vigilant’

Continued from previous page

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

Continued from previous page

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 in hats on when we do this work,” he said. “Often in when there is research going on in a lab there is more 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.”

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

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