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STIHL
FEATURES

12 COVERS STORY: THE LM 100
Our spin on some of the best and most visible golf courses, athletic and grounds facilities, and lawn/landscape companies in North America—ones that help set the standards for green industry excellence. How did we pick them? See Jerry Roche’s “Opening Shots” column on page 2.

26 SEED AVAILABILITY: IT’S SHORT
It will not be easy to find the exact turfseed you might want this fall, if reports from seed growers are accurate. Here is a complete rundown of suppliers’ most requested cultivars.

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The original “Don’t Bag It” program was meant to address turfgrass clippings, but there is some wisdom in extending the concept to other landscape debris like tree prunings, broken branches, twigs and brush.

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CONSIDERATIONS IN PESTICIDE SELECTION
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R.L. BRANDENBURG, Ph.D.
OPENING SHOTS

The LM 100: what makes them tick?

If you're asking what an "LM 100" is, you can join most of our other 50,000+ readers. Simply put, it's this month's cover story, a new project we have undertaken this year. It's a vehicle by which we can recognize the biggest, brightest and best of the green industry. We hope to make this an annual "event" in the magazine, and there's no reason why it can't be, with your help.

Certainly, a project of this magnitude isn't undertaken on a whim. But there wasn't much staff debate about giving it a go. We are united in the firm belief that many top organizations in the U.S. green industry should, in some way, be further recognized for their valuable contributions to the industry's image.

Some of the friends and acquaintances you've made at turf meetings might be on this year's list. You might recognize the names of some of your competitors. And if you're a progressive organization dedicated to propagating the benefits of well-maintained, beautiful turf and ornamentals, we may even have contacted you last month about joining our list.

We selected this year's "LM 100" based on a variety of criteria. Probably the most important was national visibility, both in the green industry itself and in the general public's eye. That might mean a PGA Tour championship golf course. It might mean a landscaping company whose owner has served on his or her national organization with due diligence in the past year. It might mean a lawn care company that goes beyond the call of duty to uphold the virtues of green grass and customer retention. Or it might mean a college whose grounds manager has personally invited us to his campus to check out the athletic fields.

The other criteria we used to select these 100 included:

- continuing relationship with the leading national association serving their specific trade (and we asked the associations for referrals);
- good business practices;
- availability to the trade press (specifically LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT) for quotable quotes, good business/agronomic tips;
- "image" (a subjective quality, at best);
- dedication to the green industry; and
- efficiency of the organization.

We realize that this entire list is very subjective indeed. We expect our 100 to be discussed, debated and contested—not necessarily for the organizations we've named to the list, but more for those that we've left off (and we've left off quite a few).

Senior editor Ron Hall was final authority on what lawn and landscaping companies were selected. Managing editor Terry McIver handled selection of the golf courses and athletic fields that made this year's list. And the three of us continued to be amazed at the number of really good, visible organizations from which we could choose. We realize that, if we had the room in this month's magazine to do justice to 250 organizations (or even more), we could have easily expanded the list.

So to those who made our "LM 100" this year: thank you, and keep up the good work. You can look forward to receiving your official "LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT 100" framable certificate in the mail in the coming weeks.

To those who didn't "make the cut" this year: let us know about your organization (we've always got time to chat), keep up the good work, and remember that there's always next year. LM

Questions, comments? Contact Jerry by phoning (216) 826-2830, faxing (216) 891-2675 or e-mailing to 75553.502@compuserve.com.
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Post-emergence grass control

Is there a product or practice which can help manage weedy grasses in Kentucky bluegrass, ryegrass and fine fescue lawns once they have germinated?

—INDIANA

You may be dealing with annual grassy weeds or perennial grassy weeds. For annual grassy weeds, like crabgrass, post-emergence herbicides such as Daconate-6, Acclaim or Dimension can be used. Ideally, these products should be applied when annual weedy grasses are very young. Since Dimension has both pre- and post-emergence activity, it can be applied during the period of germination. After germination, until about the six-leaf stage, Acclaim has given the best results in our field studies. Once the plants begin to tiller, the treatment response may vary, depending on the type of product, air temperature and other factors.

In addition to chemical management, it is also beneficial to provide good cultural practices such as mowing, watering, fertilizing and pest management—to improve the health of desirable turfgrass.

Other groups of grassy weeds include perennial plants, such as coarse or tall fescue and quackgrass. For tall fescue management, consider using Lesco TFC selective herbicide. Reports indicate that TFC treatments in the fall give the best results. Another option is to either mechanically hand-dig the tall fescue clumps or spot-treat them with Roundup or Finale, and then overseed the area.

For weeds such as quackgrass, there is no selective herbicide. Digging and removing is not practical because the quackgrass has rhizomatous underground stems. It is very prolific and difficult to remove the roots. Portions of the plant can produce new growth. So instead of treating just the plant, it is a good idea to treat a large, heavily infested area with Roundup or Finale. Be aware that these herbicides will kill every green plant which they contact. Also, caution should be taken while applying these herbicides. If the herbicide comes in contact with your shoes, it could be carried to other parts of the property. Quite often, plants like quackgrass with underground rhizomatous growth habits may require a follow-up treatment 7 to 10 days later.

Once the treatment is satisfactory, (after 7 to 10 days), prepare the treated area for seeding and seed it with desirable compatible grass mixture or blends. Always read and follow label specifications for best results.

Tiny trees a vexation

We are finding young seedlings of maple and oaks in lawns. What can be done to get rid of these?

—OHIO

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HOT TOPICS

Minimum wage act disallows paying travel time to workers who take company trucks home

by JAMES E. GUYETTE / Contributing Editor

Legislation that increases the minimum wage to $4.75 an hour also includes a provision that allows workers to take home company vehicles without being paid for the time spent traveling.

Known as "home garaging," the strategy of allowing landscape crew members to commute to and from the jobsite in company trucks parked overnight at their homes had been under fire from the U.S. Department of Labor. The main issue is that landscape managers and other small business owners, such as contractors, seldom pay their workers an hourly wage for this time spent driving to and from the jobsite.

This put them on a collision course with Labor Department regulations that mandate such travel time payments—even though workers may have negotiated away the pay in exchange for being able to take the truck home.

Allowing crews to take home company vehicles can be a matter of good business sense. Workers can arrive at the jobsite quicker, and a vehicle parked overnight at a worker’s home rather than in a company lot, is often more secure. Using the company truck to get to and from work is largely viewed by employees as a perk, yet national union officials had opposed these arrangements.

The “Travel Time Bill” within the Minimum Wage Act will permit this type of program as it amends the Portal-to-Portal Act of 1947.

“The bill will become law as soon as the President signs it,” says John Runyan of the Labor Policy Association, an industry trade group based in Washington. He adds that the measure first has to be passed by a Congressional conference committee because the House and Senate have approved differing specifics. “Under any scenario, it is now a virtual certainty that the travel time problem will be resolved favorably,” he reports.

“Commuting in company-owned vehicles is beneficial to both employer and employees. Yet under the [previous] law, employers were at great risk if they had such programs and did not compensate employees for time spent commuting,” Runyan notes.

Owners of landscaping businesses that set up these programs faced the possibility of stiff fines and other business repercussions. Runyan seeks “a common-sense answer to this dilemma. It makes clear that commuting in company-owned vehicles is not working time so long as there is an agreement between the employer and employee, and the commute is 'within a normal commuting distance' of the employer’s business."

Runyan says voluntary use of company-owned vehicles results in:

• consumer savings,
• expeditious service,
• employee convenience,
• parking and vehicle storage advantages, and
• vehicle and cargo safety.

Municipal lawmakers might have something additional to say, however, many of them have laws against parking commercial vehicles of certain sizes in residential driveways.