It's simple. PRE-M® is the country's leading pendimethalin herbicide. And no wonder. With over 12 years of proven performance and formulation improvements, PRE-M is here to help your business grow.

What's more, PRE-M comes from the leading supplier in the professional turf care industry, LESCO®.

Talk to your LESCO professional about new, special rebates for PRE-M purchases, or call 800-321-5325. And put the leading edge to work for you.

The Leading Edge.

Circle No. 102 on Reader Inquiry Card
FEATURES

SPECIAL REPORT

22 MAKE CONSOLIDATION WORK FOR YOU
We chronicle who's consolidating and how to make the best of it
LM STAFF REPORT

23 NEW PLAYERS, NEW RULES
Big consolidations are changing the industry forever. Here's how.

28 WHO'S CONSOLIDATING?

33 HOLD 'EM OR FOLD 'EM
Contractors — sellers & independents — speak out

39 SELLING? GET HELP NOW

42 STAYING INDEPENDENT
There are plenty of ways to compete with the big boys

44 LM REPORTS: WALK-BEHIND MOWERS
New, productive machines
Curt Harler

52 CONTROLLING CRABGRASS IN COOL-SEASON TURF
By Zac Reichert, Ph.D.

58 THE SOUTH'S ORNERY NEW WEEDS
By Bert McCarty, Ph.D.

64 TOP 10 ORNAMENTAL WEEDS
By Jeffrey F. Derr, Ph.D.

70 TIME TO ADD A NEW SERVICE?
Know what's profitable first
By Ed Wandro, MBA

74 AWARD-WINNING LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT:
Post Dunwoody Apartment Homes

76 TAKE THE PLUNGE INTO IRRIGATION
This add-on service can be a natural
By Palma Patrucci
It works over time.

Dodge Rams are the longest-lasting full-size pickups on the road. And over time, they’re capable of a tremendous amount of work. Options like a fold-down business console with room for a laptop computer and cell phone make Ram efficient. And the capability of its Magnum® engine lineup is downright legendary. Our On The Job program is another strong work benefit. With it, qualified commercial customers can get special APR reductions when financing through Chrysler Financial. We also offer TRAC, Capital, and Municipal Lease options that allow customers to tailor-make a deal based on individual needs. Plus, depending on the model, you can choose from a $300 cash allowance, a 100,000-mile/5-year Powertrain Care Plus service contract with Road Hazard Tire Coverage, or select upfit package allowances.** If you work with Ram, we’ll work with you.

Call toll-free 1-877-ON-THE-JOB or visit www.4adodge.com

*Based on percentage of 7/88-7/97 new pickup registrations still registered on 7/1/97. Data source: The Polk Company. **Service contract option not available in AL, FL, MS, OK, or UT. No refund if canceled. Some vehicles ineligible. There is a $100 deductible for each covered repair visit. Tire coverage covers only complete or pro-rated replacement for original four tires, excluding spare. See plan copy and full details at dealer. Upfitters are solely responsible for after-market modifications and equipment. Properly secure all cargo.
Finally, the most comprehensive Green Industry information is at your fingertips 24 hours a day. (Isn't that a bright idea?)

ADVANSTAR'S LANDSCAPE GROUP PRESENTS

www.landscapegroup.com

The Internet Home of the Green Industry.
A proud supporter of these green industry professional organizations:

**Associated Landscape Contractors of America**
150 Elden Street, Suite 270, Herndon, VA 20170
(703) 736-9666; http://www.alca.org

**American Nursery & Landscape Association**
1250 I St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005
(202) 789-2900

**Independent Turf and Ornamental Distributors Association**
1217 Wayburn
Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230
(313) 331-7739

**The Irrigation Association**
8260 Willow Oaks Corporate Dr. Suite 120
Fairfax, VA 22031-4513
(703) 573-3551; http://www.irrigation.org

**National Arborist Association**
The Meeting Place Mall, P.O. Box 1094,
Amherst, NH 03031-1094
(603) 673-3311; http://www.natlarb.com

**Ohio Turfgrass Foundation**
1100-H Brandywine Blvd., P.O. Box 3388,
Zanesville, OH 43702-3388
(888) 683-3445

**The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute**
341 South Patrick St.
Old Town Alexandria, Va. 22314
(703) 549-7600; http://opei.mow.org

**Professional Grounds Management Society**
120 Cockeyesville Rd., Suite 104,
Hunt Valley, MD 21031
(410) 584-9754

**Professional Lawn Care Association of America**
1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-135,
Marietta, GA 30068-2112
(770) 977-5222; http://www.plcaa.org

**Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment**
1156 15th St. NW, Suite 400,
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 872-3860; http://www.acpa.org/rise

**Sports Turf Managers Association**
1375 Rolling Hills Loop, Council Bluffs, IA 51503-8552
(712) 366-2669; (800) 323-3875;
http://www.aip.com/stma

**Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association**
P.O. Box 156, New Prague, MN 56071
(612) 758-5811

Spring Special — 25% Off!
Order colorful BLOOMERS® 100% wildflower seed (no filler) ideal for roadsides, parks, golf course roughs and vacant lots. Wide area of adaptation. 1 lb. covers 4,500 sq. ft., 5 lb. minimum.
5 lbs. BLOOMERS $105.00 / 50 lbs. BLOOMERS $995.00

Call 800-247-6910 today!

**The Landscape Management Handbook**
edited by William E. Knoop
125 pages, softcover, Item #LSMB830 $34.95

This new single-source reference provides the most current and comprehensive information on the basics of turfgrass and landscape management available today!

Call 1-800-598-6008
Fax: 218-723-9146 • Outside the U.S. 218-723-9180

ADVANTAGE MARKETING SERVICES • Customer Service Dept. • 131 W. 1st St., Duluth, MN 55802
Shipping/Fax: UPS—add $5 per order; plus $1 per additional book. International, Hawaii, Alaska, Canada and expedited shipments—call for rates. Residents of CA, CT, GA, IL, MN, NJ, NY, OH and TX must add sales tax. Prices subject to change.
CODE: 960072
A reputation doesn’t build on itself, unless you work at it. That’s why we wait to introduce a piece of new equipment until we’re sure it will end up as legendarily reliable, and as durable as its predecessors. We buck trends, too. We stamp most of our mower decks, rather than going the easier — and less durable — fabricated route. Our goal in designing our wide-area walk-behind transmissions was to back them with a 3-year limited warranty. (No wonder they ended up unlike any others.) We didn’t rest until the F620 Z-Trak
Mower was the easiest to service zero-turning-radius mower in the industry. And we held out until the new John Deere XT Series handhelds set new standards in sound quality, low vibration, and power. Take a look at any piece of John Deere equipment, from the largest to the smallest, and you'll discover equal devotion to quality and innovation in every one. And you'll find it all at your local John Deere dealer — who truly has the best reputation of all. For the one near you, call 1-800-537-8233, or visit www.deere.com.

Circle No. 104 on Reader Inquiry Card

Nothing Runs Like a Deere®
Wonder if consolidation is a fad? Don’t think so. The flow of millions of dollars into the landscape industry has changed it forever. This can be bad news for you, or it can be the opportunity of a lifetime. And you don’t have to sell out to succeed in this new market.

I’ve watched this consolidating market with a mixture of admiration and confusion. It has characteristics that are familiar but I couldn’t put my finger on it until I realized it’s like a mating dance or courtship ritual. Think about it.

Two organizations eye each other from a distance, start a form of courtship by talking together (sometimes in secret) and exchanging confidences, and then the fun begins. The buyers may hear rumors that some other organization is interested in the target company and press their suit more strongly, perhaps upping the ante. When the seller finally commits and both organizations reach an accord, they boldly and happily announce their intentions to the world. These announcements have come so rapidly lately it seems like everyone is getting “hitched.”

If our industry’s companies were Wall Street’s “wallflowers” before, they’re suddenly much in demand. The giddy deal-making and cashing in after hard years establishing a business is wonderful for those involved, and we wish them the best of luck in their new organizations and ventures.

It will be interesting watching from the sidelines as the fallout begins, and the inevitable number of failed acquisitions happen. According to Allan Springer, vice president, business development for GrowScape LLC (a new consolidator), statistics show that 57% of the acquisitions made in the last 10 years failed to meet the original objectives. Sounds like the U.S. divorce rate statistics.

Despite lengthy and careful due diligence, despite strong intuition, despite the fact that both sides will try very hard to make each acquisition integration work, many will not.

What about those of you who won’t be selling? How much will consolidation hurt your business, or offer opportunities? In this issue of Landscape Management, our staff offers the first of a series showing how consolidation has affected the industry and how you can respond. We profile the key players, their strategies and what they’re looking for on page 28. We talk to contractors who have sold their businesses and those who will remain independent (page 33). If you want to sell, we sift through the finer points of making your best deal (page 39). And if you’re staying independent, we recommend some opportunities to keep you competitive with the big boys (page 40).

Business management pundits tell us that adapting rapidly to marketplace change is the key to staying competitive. Whatever your situation, consolidation brings new threats, opportunities and decisions. LM
Good weed control, but wait until they all demand a raise at once.

There's good. There's better. Then there's the best: Snapshot® herbicide. It controls more broadleaf weeds and grasses than any other preemergent herbicide. 111 species, to be exact. For up to 8 months. Without damaging your ornamentals. Contact your distributor for more information about Snapshot. Or, call 1-800-255-3726. You'll control weeds. And labor costs.
How to prune euonymous

How do you prune Euonymus alatus compacta (burning bush) when used in a formal landscape—best time, worst time, promoting new bud growth and fall color?

—MICHIGAN

The burning bush (Euonymus alatus compacta) is a spring blooming plant. These shrubs, and small trees such as redbud, flowering or Kousa dogwood, forsythia, mountain laurel, privet, magnolia, crabapple, mock orange, rhododendron and lilac produce flowers on last year’s wood. They produce flower buds late in the season, so if they are pruned during the dormant season in winter, they will not have flowers the following spring. Therefore, to maximize flowers and colorful berries, burning bush should be pruned after blooming.

However, winter pruning can help determine the architecture and shape of the plant. If there are any crossing branches, they are easy to notice and can be pruned off at this time.

Some of the burning bush plants may reach the size of a small tree. These small tree-type plants can be best trimmed during the dormant season. Recognizing branching structural defects and making proper collar cuts is easier without the leaves.

Another euonymous question

What would cause winged euonymous leaves to fold? Inside the fold were egg masses and some leaves had extensive notching, similar to black vine weevil adult feeding damage. But we usually see black vine weevil damage later than this. We also found some weevils that looked different from black vine weevil.

—CONNECTICUT

Your problem may be the adult two-banded Japanese weevil, a pest on ornamental plants such as azalea, dogwood, euonymous, forsythia, holly, lilac, privet, rhododendron, rose, spirea and viburnum in several eastern states.

This weevil has a much-broadened abdomen and a short snout, is gray to dark-brown in color with two dark bands on the wing cover. They are about 1/5 to 1/3 inches in size. Their larvae are like the black vine weevil, but shorter, legless and 3/8 inch long.

The two-banded Japanese weevil can overwinter as eggs, larvae or adults in debris, and becomes active from April to July. During June, newly emerged adults (developing from immature overwintered adults) can be found along with old adults, which have duller markings. This weevil has one generation per year with overlapping stages of life.

These weevils become active two to four weeks earlier than black vine weevils. Around May, eggs are laid in leaves on the ground or on the plant. The adults use their legs to fold the leaf edges, then deposit one to nine eggs. Eggs hatch, larvae crawl from the leaves, then burrow into the soil and develop on roots.

Unlike black vine weevil, the adult feeding of the two-banded Japanese weevil is reportedly greater than the larval damage. Adults feed by day and remain on the host at night. Black vine weevils feed at night, take shelter during day at the base of plant in debris and can be easily trapped. Since two-banded Japanese weevils stay on the plant, the trapping technique using boards, etc., will not be practical. However, at night you can place some paper or sheets on the ground and shake the plant to dislodge the insect.

It is also possible you may find both two-banded Japanese weevil and black vine weevils on the same plant and both will cause similar crescent-shaped feeding notching damage. The two-banded Japanese weevil often feeds in clusters and can defoliate the plants by late summer.

Mechanical removal may not be very effective because adults emerge over an extended period. To date, all the adults have been found to be female, which probably means females can produce viable eggs without mating. Insecticides used for black vine weevil management may also work for two-banded Japanese weevils, but the timing should be two to three weeks earlier than black vine weevil management. This needs further research to determine the product efficacy. LM