When it comes to preventing the broadleaf and grassy weeds that most often plague your customers' turfgrasses, PRE-M® preemergent herbicide is right on target. Why pay more for other products when, time after time, university trials prove that PRE-M offers you better overall performance combined with unmatched value?

Superior performance made PRE-M the leading preemergent herbicide. Superior value widens the gap. PRE-M is everything you'd expect from LESCO®, the leading supplier in the professional turf care industry.

Ask your LESCO professional or call 1-800-321-5325 to learn how you can earn generous rebates for your PRE-M purchases.

Get behind the leading edge.


Always read and follow label directions.
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For more than 30 years, Kubota has been building diesel powered equipment to handle tough turf and landscaping projects.

Kubota M-Series utility tractors, from 47-90 net engine HP, offer a user friendly design and an ergonomically engineered operator platform for comfort and ease of operation. These tractors are powered by quiet Kubota E-TVCS diesel engines. Cab models provide a zone of operator comfort and all weather protection.

The compact sized B21/L35 TLB's are designed to work in tight places and are easy to transport from one job site to the next with a 1/2 ton pick-up and trailer. Versatility is provided with Kubota's quick-attach backhoe, Category I, 3-point hitch and rear PTO.

Kubota Grand L-Ten Series from 30 to 46 net engine HP offer a variety of transmission choices - fully synchronized main and shuttle transmission (FST), clutchless glide shift transmission (GST) and the new "FeatherStep" HST.

The F60 front mowers increase a crew's productivity with ease of operation and precision cutting. The Auto Assist 4WD with dual-acting, over-running clutch system delivers turf saving traction, in forward and reverse.

When you have tough turf and landscaping jobs to get done, get Kubota.
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*Based on comparison of base 5-speed, regular cab models.

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It’s 3 a.m. and you’re tossing in bed, awake and worrying. In the dark, you stew about your cash flow, whether your assistant Dean is going out on his own (he does) and how to get that slow-paying condo to pay on time (it doesn’t). Your mind races but at this hour of the morning there are no answers, only uncertainties. Welcome to what I call the “midnight watch” of entrepreneurship.

I stayed awake too, when I ran my small company for 11 years, and I remember how scary it felt. It is scary because owning a business means shouldering the risk and most of us don’t have a bailout.

As an action-minded entrepreneur, you might take the next step: “I’ll find a new angle, a new customer, a new ‘twist’ that will make these problems insignificant. I’ll just sell more!” It may not work out that way but it seems comforting at the time.

As growth is the basis of business, I can’t say this thinking is wrong, just a path you should consider carefully. Most business experts preach that you tend the home fires first, before you wander far afield. Make it work right, then grow it, they say.

That’s good advice. You can’t have a fundamentally weak business, an unprofitable one or a dysfunctional one and expect to successfully handle new projects, customers or services. It’s too risky and it won’t work for long. You’ll do yourself more good if you concentrate on a few major goals:

- Strengthen your operations to make them effective
- Reevaluate your pricing and production to make them profitable
- Invest in your employees to make your services consistently good

Remember your strengths and focus your business on them.

Of course, these sound easy but they take constant work, as most good things do. There’s nothing easy about making a business successful — it’s a constant focus for every business, because business involves risk, all the time.

Carve yourself a new niche

But let’s say you think you’re ready to try that new angle, seek out new customers or add a new service twist. Our cover story (page 30) has several ideas that might work for you or might be the basis for new twists of your own.

Some of your fellow contractors have gotten great reception from the marketplace, and they’re making these niches profitable, with few competitors. Check them out!

Sound good? I recommend before you take the plunge, analyze your options. Last year’s March issue included a story (“Time to Add a New Service?” page 70) with guidelines for analyzing a new service from a financial perspective. If you don’t have this story, give us a call at 800/225-4569 x2729 and we’ll get you one. You can work through the analysis and then get down to your own ‘risky business.’ — SG

"Business experts say to tend the home fires first, before you wander far afield. That’s good advice.” —SG
Ten-gallon fuel capacity assures a full day of operation without refueling. Inventive top-draw tanks enhance reliability, since fuel system is much less likely to be clogged by debris.

Frame-mounted Ross MB Series 14.5 cubic inch wheel motors and large-capacity hydraulic oil reservoir are just some of the features that make Mid-Series machines the most durable zero-turning-radius mowers around.
Greater operator comfort equals greater productivity. That's why Mid-Series mowers come complete with ergonomic dual-lever controls; easy cut-height adjustment; high-back, deep-cushioned adjustable seat with armrests; and dual cupholders.

With an industry-best 5.75-inch depth, maximum blade overlap of over 1.5 inches, and full-length front baffle (to eliminate dead space and brush grass into an ideal vertical position), a 7-gauge stamped steel 7-Iron deck produces a flawless cut, even in the wettest, lushest conditions.

These mowers are in great shape. A wide-stance and low center of gravity allow them to easily handle hills, and their compact size means they're perfect for trailering.

The union of a rugged power unit and the industry's first seven-gauge stamped steel deck was an experiment that went amazingly right. Now productivity that used to exist only in theory is available in the form of three, new, hardworking machines — the Mid-Series Z-Trak® Mowers from John Deere. High-torque 23- and 25-hp V-Twin engines, tough componentry (like massive Ross MB Series wheel motors), fast 9-mph mowing speeds, and deepest-on-the-planet 7-Iron™ decks let them outperform, and outlast, any competitor. No wonder they're the most-profitable zero-turning-radius mowers ever made. For irrefutable proof, see your John Deere dealer for a test-drive (call 1-800-537-8233 to locate one near you).

Circle No. 107 on Reader Inquiry Card
events
WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

May 2000

15-18 Texas Turfgrass
Association Conference /
Galveston, TX; 409/690-2201

19-21 Turfgrass Producers
International Summer
Conference and Field Days /
Spokane, WA; 800/405-TURF

22-24 International Lawn,
Garden and Power
Equipment Expo / Louisville,
KY; 800/558-8767

24-25 PLCAA Legislative
Day On The Hill / Washington,
D.C.; 800/458-3466

June 2000

14-18 Florida Turfgrass
Association Annual
Conference and Show /
Gainesville, FLA; 800/882-6721

15 Cornell Field Day / Ithaca,
NY; 607/255-1792

August 2000

July 2000

12 Maryland Turfgrass
Research Field Day & Open
House / Paint Branch Turfgrass
Research Facility; John M. Krouse;
301/403-4234.

13-15 International
Irrigation Expo / Leon
Guanajuato, Mexico; (461)
60427,25977,25985

13-16 ANLA Convention
and Executive Learning
Retreat / Vancouver, BC;
202/789-2900

13-16 ALCA Summer
Leadership Meeting / San
Diego, CA; 800/395-2522

September 2000

1-8 Southwest Horticultural
Trade Show / Phoenix, AZ;
Sponsored by the Arizona Nursery
Association; 480/966-1610

25-27 Trees, People and
the Law Conference /
Nebraska City, NE; Sponsored by
the National Arbor Day
Foundation; 402/474-5655

OCTOBER 2000

4-5 Turfgrass Landscape
and Equipment Expo / Costa
Mesa, CA; 818/764-5016

28-30 ASLA Annual
Meeting and Expo / St. Louis,
MO; 202/898-2444