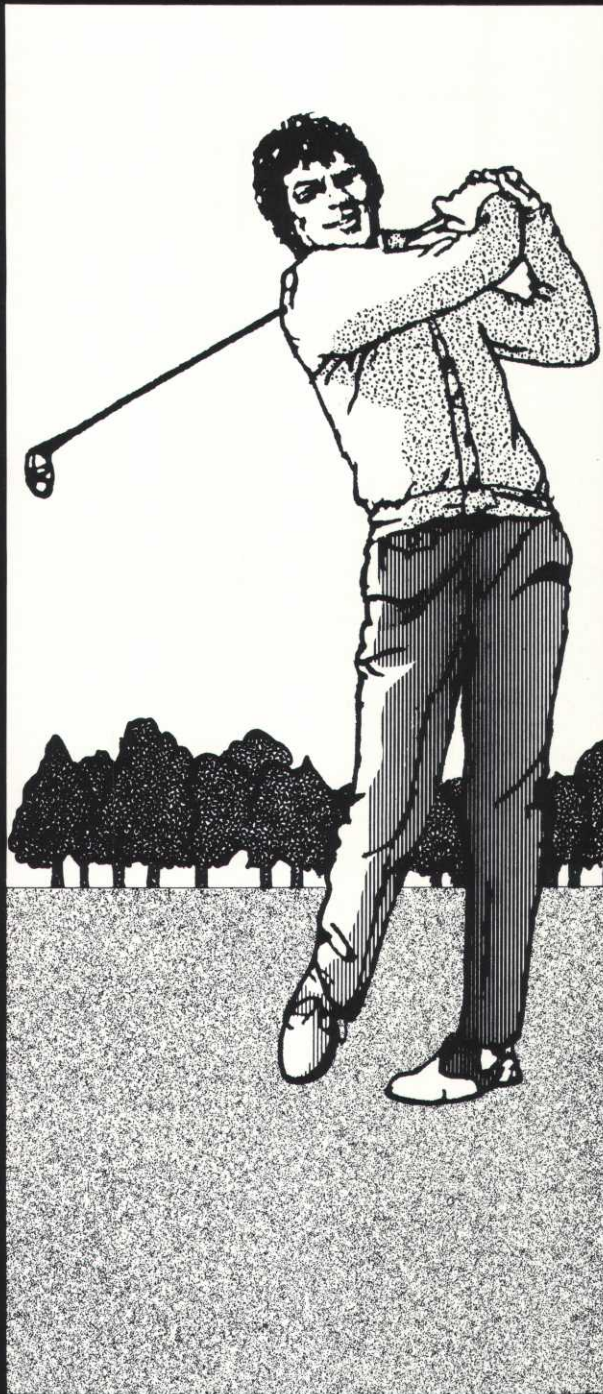


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Management

Keeping good help... the investment pays

Lawn care, landscape and golf course managers continue to be concerned about "turnover." Not only customer or member turnover, but also that which occurs within the staff.

Do you know how much it costs your company or club to hire and train new employees? How much employee turnover affects the quality of the work you do? Or what types of things can you do to reduce the expense and time invested in maintaining a good staff?

These are some of the questions Mark Cobb, president of Elite Landscape, San Bernardino, California, asked himself at the onset of his now 13-year-old business. He felt then, and still believes, that he had two choices: either hire temporary, seasonal labor; or hire a full-time, trained staff to get the jobs done. He chose the latter, and has no regrets.

"When we hire someone, we tell them we're not hiring them on a temporary basis," he relates. "Once they have passed a probationary period, we intend to keep them."

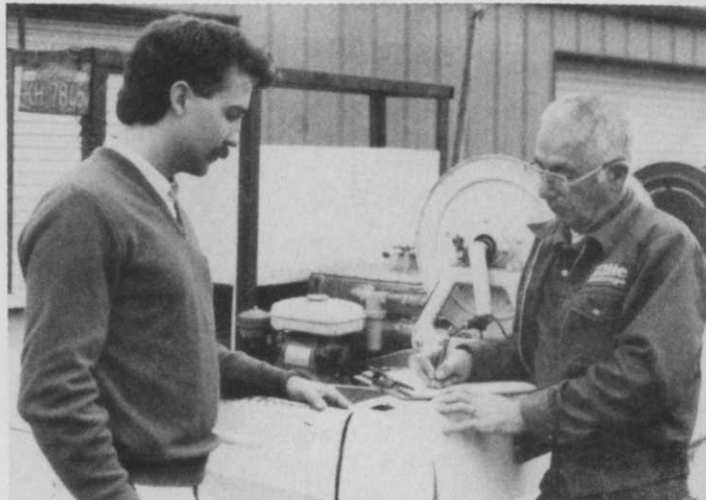
Today, the company employs 45 individuals, well over half of which have more than one year of tenure with the firm. Divided into three divisions — landscape maintenance, sprinkler repair/small jobs and chemical application — the company's more technically oriented positions tend to have the least amount of turnover.

EMPLOYEE INCENTIVES, TRAINING

"We send as many people as possible to outside training seminars," Cobb states, noting that in a recent 2-month period, the company spent nearly \$1,200 on training.

"Each year, we send up to 15 crew chiefs to a horticultural short course offered by the University of California Extension Service."

Monthly staff meetings set the



Mark Cobb, president of Elite Landscape (left), and group supervisor Jim Bridges discuss a maintenance program for one of the company's commercial and industrial clients.

scene for all personnel promotions or bonuses, and even Elite's dress code is geared for incentive.

Uniforms are color-keyed for tenure and position, Cobb says. New employees wear light blue shirts, more experienced personnel wear dark blue and crew chiefs wear golf shirts bearing the company name and insignia.

Cobb concedes that one of the most meaningful of all the incentives offered by Elite Landscaping is represented by the color green...as in dollars. Health and safety programs have resulted in the company receiving rebates on workers compensation which is then divided among the staff. This year, it meant a bonus of \$124 per person.

In the meantime, Elite paid only 89 percent of the insurance rates charged to others in the industry.

Cobb also describes an attendance bonus program the company follows, where employees receive extra wages based on the number of consecutive weeks attendance standards are met.

"We realize that people get sick occasionally and have to take sick leave, but this is just an extra bonus for staying healthy," he maintains. "More importantly, it encourages preventive health."

SAVING ON LABOR

Finding and keeping good help, plus training those individuals to use cost-saving tools and techniques,

are important to the success of Cobb's company. Chemical use, for example, makes it possible to provide high quality at a reasonable price. Preemergence herbicides play a large role in keeping the company competitive.

"Anything we can do to save labor makes us more competitive," he points out. "The whole business is manpower. That's why we use chemicals where we can, and why we strive so hard to keep experienced people who are qualified and certified to use them."

Surflan[®], one of the mainstays of Elite's weed control program, has proven to be a valuable tool in holding down labor costs. Cobb claims that the herbicide "has been sprayed over the top of just about every shrub and ornamental that grows in southern California."

"The chemicals are making it possible for us to provide high quality and a low price — especially when it comes to hand weeding," Cobb relates. They stretch dollars invested in labor and allow the company to emphasize their employee retention program.

"When you're dealing with landscape maintenance, chemicals are only a small part of the total cost," he concludes. "Yet, they allow us to do so much more with our time and manpower. We'd be hard pressed to do business without them." ■

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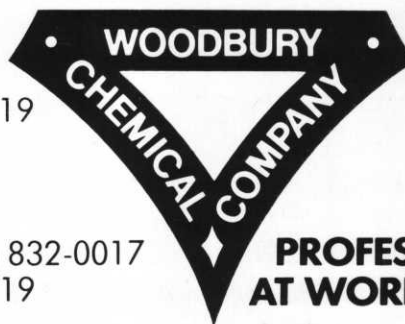
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IFAS Software Covers Pest Control, Greenhouses

AS agricultural use of computers continues to increase, so does the demand for software and training.

Growers want software tailored specifically to their needs and many agricultural software companies, along with the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), are working to meet these needs.

In fact, the newest IFAS software catalog is just off the press. It's free and offers 58 software packages. They are quite a bargain, too—generally \$20 each, just enough to cover materials, postage and handling. For catalog or program, contact your county extension agent or the IFAS Software Support Office, University of Florida, Bldg. 120 Room 203, Gainesville, FL 32611. Phone: (904)

392-7853.

In the catalog are three new programs:

- With the need to maintain current pest control information, IFAS is offering the Florida Pest Control Guides on floppy disk. Plans are underway to allow users to update the data disks on a regular basis, thus providing more up-to-date information than can be provided with annual printed control guides.

- Chemical Movement in Layer Soil (CMLS) is a program which estimates the movement of chemicals through soil. Growers who are concerned about contaminating ground water sources use CMLS to choose a chemical which is slow to move through the soil and growers who

are concerned about runoff use CMLS to choose a chemical which is quicker to move through the soil.

- Greenhouse owners use the Estimation of Greenhouse Heat Losses to estimate the amount of heat loss from their greenhouse. If heat loss is high, they use the program to experiment with different combinations of wall and roof coverings, to find the best combination for their building.

For those who want training, one alternative is to set aside a regular time each week for a few weeks to attend a class sponsored by a community college, continuing education program or dealer. Books, tutorial programs and VCR tapes are great for self-paced study. Users groups are clubs of computer users who meet regularly and often have informal training sessions. Agribusiness computer consultants are also available to come to your home or business and give you personalized training.

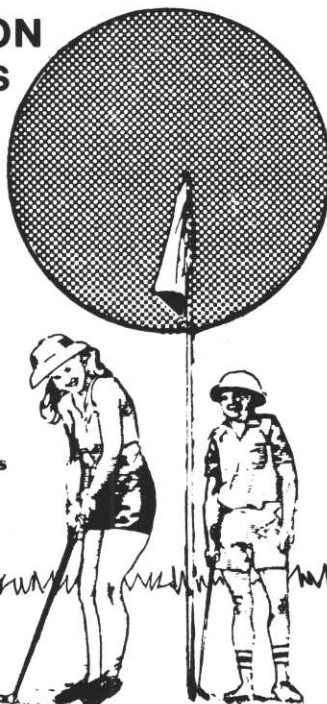
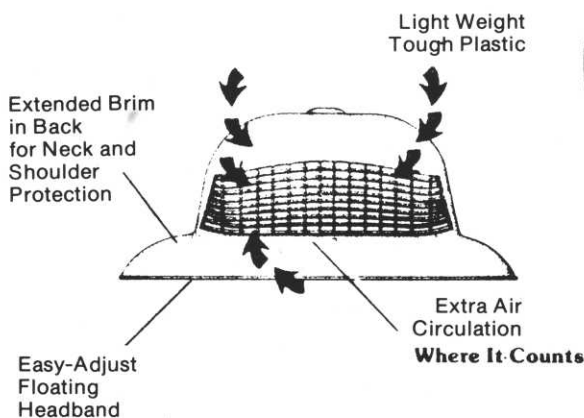
The great value in training is the Florida Agribusiness Computer Short Course and Trade Show, organized each year by IFAS. Plan now for the 1989 program Jan. 18-19 at Broward Community College North Campus in Pompano Beach. Over 100 talk sessions and hands-on workshops will be presented during the two days. General business applications include spreadsheets, word processing and databases. The agricultural applications include ornamentals, turf, citrus, beef, dairy and vegetables. A Wednesday seminar series is planned specifically for those who are planning to buy a computer. A Thursday series covers advanced topics for experienced computer users. A youth program will also be offered Thursday. ■

About the author:

Dr. Dennis Watson is an agricultural engineering professor at the University of Florida. He coordinates the IFAS Software Support Office, Bldg. 120 Room 203, Gainesville, FL 32611. Phone: (904) 392-7853.

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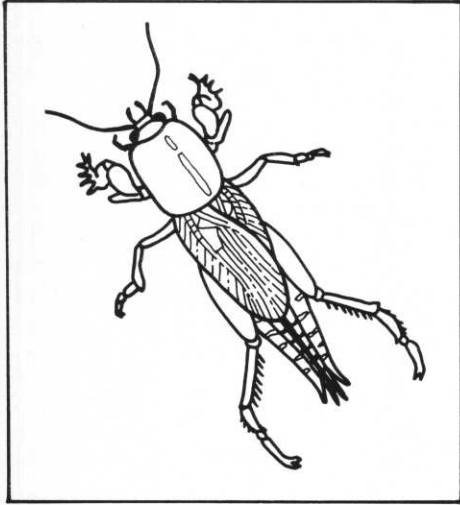


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New Mole Cricket Control



RHONE-Poulenc Ag Company has introduced SEVIMOL® brand 4 carbaryl insecticide for the control of mole crickets in certain Southeastern states. The product will be sold under EPA policy interpretation 2(ee) of FIFRA as amended; in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina and Texas.

According to the company, 'SEVIMOL® is a unique formulation of carbaryl insecticide plus attractant systems which provide economical and effective control of mole crickets. SEVIMOL® does not require pre-watering or watering-in after application, does not readily photode-

grade, has no odor and is a non-restricted use pesticide. In addition, the product controls 25 other turfgrass insects and 87 tree and ornamental insects. Other formulations of the product are also used to control pests on pets, poultry and even some game birds."

SEVIMOL® should be applied at the rate of 3 - 4.5 fluid ounces in 1 - 2 gallons of water per 1,000 square feet.

For more information write to: Rhone-Poulenc Ag Company, Specialty Products, P.O. Box 12014, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709.

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Lofts Field Day Coincides with 65th Anniversary

NEARLY two hundred turf professionals picked up plenty of valuable firsthand information at the Field Day recently hosted by Lofts Seed Inc. Loft's Field Day is an annual event in which the seed company opens its research center to the turf industry. This year's event was especially meaningful, since it coincided with Loft's 65th anniversary.

Topics of interest were geared towards golf course superintendents, lawn service industry members and lawn supply dealers and distributors. Speakers included Cornell University's Dr. Martin Petrovic, Drs. Louis Vasvary and Henry Indyk, both of Rutgers U., and Dr. Joseph Vargas of Michigan State U. Topics included ground water quality, grub control, general lawn maintenance and summer diseases. A similar program for sod growers was held the following day.

The program's 'Show and Tell' portion featured a tour of Lofts' research plots.

These included areas of turfgrasses, ornamental grasses, wildflowers and low-maintenance grasses. Visitors were able to see how turfgrasses respond to various conditions, and compare the varieties' appearance regarding color, texture, thatch, etc.

There was ample opportunity for discussion, and Lofts' specialists were available to answer questions. Dr. Richard Hurley, Lofts' VP and Research Director, answered queries regarding virtually every aspect of turfgrass breeding and care. Agronomist Marie Pompei, wildflower specialist, was also on hand to offer expertise on low-maintenance solutions to problem areas.

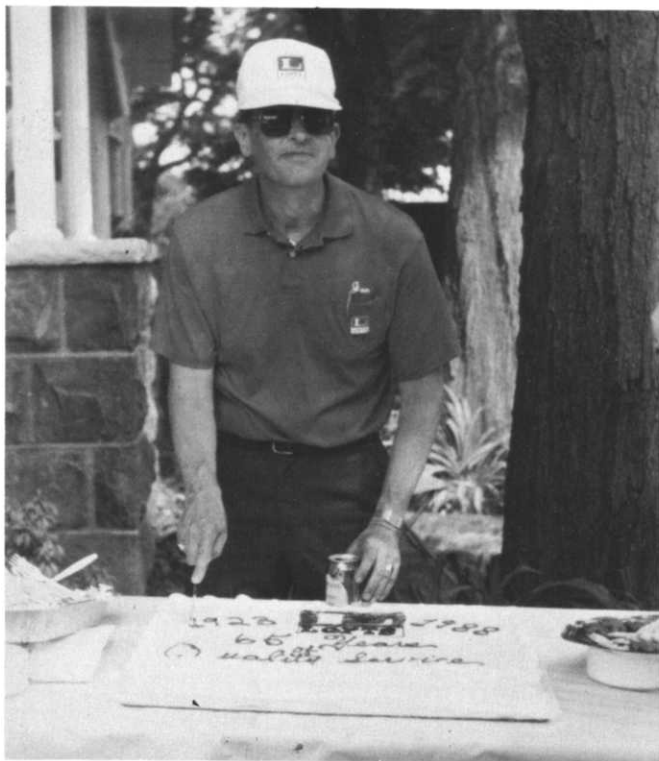
A representative from the NJ State Seed Certification Program provided a demonstration on how, as the 'watchdog agency,' they ensure strict standards for seed purity. Tests for species and variety identification; weed, crop and inert con-

tents; and germination rates were all on display. Lofts subscribes to New Jersey's strict requirements, as an inspector is present every time a bag of sod seed is packaged.

In the area of new product research, attendees were able to preview Lofts' new bentgrass, Southshore. Lofts expects to introduce the new variety within the next two years. It is only after about 12 years of rigorous testing and evaluation that a seed is chosen for commercial production.

The educational talks, demonstrations and tours occurring during Lofts Field Day represent a valuable opportunity to get all the latest information on turf from the experts. Anyone in the professional turf industry should mark his calendar for next June.

To be notified of next year's event, please contact Lofts Seed Inc., Bound Brook, NJ 08805, (201) 356-8700 or (800) 526-3890. ■



Jon Loft (President & Chairman) cuts the cake celebrating his company's 65 years in the turfgrass seed industry. The business was started by his father, Selmer Loft, in 1923.



Dr. Rich Hurley explains the performance of various turf varieties while conducting the tour of research plots.



A view of Lofts research plots, where numerous ornamental grass species and turfgrass varieties are observed and evaluated.

Having trouble
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It's no secret that bentgrasses are in short supply. It's hard to get enough creeping bentgrass.

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For new greens

Cut your bentgrass needs in half by using a mix which is 50% Jamestown and 50% bentgrass by seed weight. Not only will this match the performance of a solid bent, but will give some added benefits as well.

Jamestown establishes quickly and puts the greens into play faster. It will perform as a companion grass for up to 10 years as the bentgrass matures and gradually dominates the turf.

For repairs

Use 3-4 pounds of Jamestown with 1/2 lb. of bentgrass per 1000 square feet. This mixture has proven very effective in emergency repair of damaged greens.

For winter overseeding

Consider Jamestown as part of a mix for overseeding southern Bermudagrass greens, tees and lawns. Jamestown will enhance turf performance during winter months.

So whether it's to help out with a bentgrass shortage, or add benefits to your overseeding program, try Jamestown chewings fescue.

Jamestown chewings fescue played a big part in developing The Links at Spanish Bay in Monterey, CA:

Greens: 80% Jamestown, 20% Colonial bentgrass

Tees: 100% Jamestown

Fairways: Blend of chewings fescue including Jamestown

Roughs: Mixture of fescues including Jamestown chewings, Reliant hard, sheep and creeping red.



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A Word Of Praise

MARSHAL Foch once heard an American newsman deriding French diplomacy as "...a lot of hot air." "That may be true," Foch conceded. "Still, there is nothing but air in a tire, yet it makes the ride a good deal smoother, *n'est pas?*"

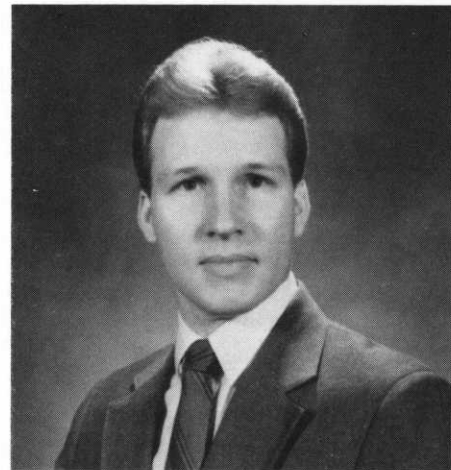
A word of praise, given here and there, may be only "hot air," but it can make a plant or office run more smoothly and more efficiently. Even when praise sometimes pretends that a man is better than he is, sometimes it helps to make him so. Time and time again, efficiency experts have found that the boss who shows appreciation for a job well done gets far more from his men than the boss who offers only criticism or who rewards good performances and bad with the same stony silence. ■

Mark Pincket Joins Lesco Team

LESCO, Inc. announced that Mark F. Pincket of Tampa, Florida has joined its growing sales forces. Pincket is serving golf course superintendents in the greater Tampa area with the LESCO "store on wheels."

In 1984 and 1985 Pincket worked as assistant superintendent at Indian Hills Country Club in Ft. Pierce, Florida. He has also worked for country clubs in Ft. Lauderdale, Coral Springs, Plantation and Sunrise, Florida. He served in the Aviation Branch of the U.S. Army as a Sergeant from 1985-1988.

Turfgrass, soil science and business administration courses were part of his curriculum at Broward Community College in Davie, Florida. He also studied aviation management at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.



Based in Rocky River, Ohio, LESCO manufactures and distributes turf care products and equipment nationally to the lawn care and golf course industries. ■

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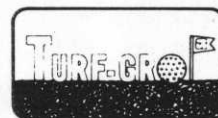
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Today's golf course superintendent has come out of the closet — he is "the best kept secret in the club." As a result of the last 20 years of progress we, as superintendents, are getting the recognition we deserve and are beginning to be seen as not only highly dedicated individuals but also as the best educated and informed executives in the club business. Still you can hear superintendents say, "How can we improve our image?" Improving our professional image, of course has to start with each one of us at our respective clubs, and I have found that the letters APE stand for six very important words that affect how we look, think, and act professionally.

The "A" stands for *Attitude* and *Appearance*. Your appearance generally reflects your attitude. A slovenly or unkept appearance gives others the impression that you have a "don't care" attitude. If you appear rumpled and rag-tag, your members have a right to ask how you can keep an orderly golf course if you can't keep yourself orderly and clean-cut. A disheveled or dirty appearance, in addition to showing

your lack of concern for detail, filters down through your crew, with undesirable results. But, appearance does not always reflect attitude; the best dressed superintendent can still have a bad mental attitude toward his work, and this may reflect personal problems that are affecting him adversely. Negative attitudes are always counter-productive; your crew will notice them and be affected, and your members will watch carefully to see if your negative approach shows up in their golf course. A positive attitude and a clean, neat appearance are essential to your successful image; improve them, and your image goes up. And if your attitude means you don't like your job, it's time to change jobs.

The "P" in APE stands for *Personality* and *Poise*, two highly important attributes of any superintendent. Poise shows we are relaxed and sure of ourselves under any circumstances, and being prepared for any circumstance, good or bad, adds to poise. We are most flustered by situations that are hard to handle because we haven't prepared for them. If you know your job and plan your work, you should never lack poise, whatever the situation. Personality, on the other hand, is formed early in life, when we develop the character traits that identify us and form our personality. ***The importance of personality is shown in a recent study at a large university regarding success — 85% of success was found to be based on personality and only 15% on ability.*** This means that two superintendents of equal ability will be judged essentially on which has the best personality. Try to determine your positive

personality traits and nurture them, and do your best to eliminate or improve what you see as your negative traits.

Expression and *Education* are represented by the "E." Expressing yourself clearly and intelligently, both in writing, and orally, is vital in communicating with your workers and members and enables you to explain the reasons behind your various programs on the course. Admittedly, oral expression is very tough for some of us; while it may be hard for us to talk to people on a one-to-one basis, speaking before a group can turn us into basket cases. An evening class in public speaking can do wonders for your poise and self-confidence, and such training will help you in your daily work even if you are rarely called on as a speaker.

The importance of education for the superintendent need hardly be explained. We should be continually adding to technical skills, and with so many sources of added knowledge available to use, this is not a difficult task. Local and national meetings and seminars, the volumes of written material in books and magazines, and the everyday give and take with fellow superintendents all offer a wealth of knowledge. Staying abreast of current ideas and applying them to improve our job skills adds greatly to our self-confidence.

Improving in these six areas, then, is the key to an improved professional image. Improving that overall image of the superintendent relies on what each of us can do to improve ourselves — that's where it starts.

Come on, Superintendents, go APE! ■

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HAHN, Inc. is introducing a new Spreader/Top Dresser as an attachment for their MULTI-PRO 44. This and other new options are described in detail in their new product literature.

The HAHN Spreader features a 17 cu. ft. steel hopper and a new drive system using a cog belt instead of chain drive. This Spreader can distribute 600 lbs. dry sand per minute in a controlled pattern, adjustable from 12 to 20 feet. It will spread fertilizer up to 45 feet.

An optional P.T.O. kit is also available to adapt the Spreader for use with a tractor's 3-point hitch.

For more information, contact HAHN, Inc., 1625 N. Garvin St., Evansville, In 47711 or call 800/457-4246 ■



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New Equipment For Lesco line

ROCKY River, Ohio — April 15, 1988 — LESCO, Inc. is pleased to announce the introduction of the LESCO Turf Renovator — another, in the line of LESCO quality turf care equipment. Designed to function as a dethatcher, slicer or slicer/seeder, the renovator is a self-propelled unit with variable ground speed from 0-4 MPH and a dethatching, slicing and seeding width of 20 inches.

The compact, low profile design provides hillside stability and ease of transporting and storing. Equipped with an 8-horsepower Briggs & Stratton I/C® engine, or an optional Honda engine, the renovator also features flotation tires for improved traction and reduced compaction. Down-pressure on the handle raises the front wheels, the seed hopper and slicing reel for easy turning.

As a slicer, the LESCO Turf Renovator dethatches lawns and general turf areas and can overseed at the same time. It has a manual depth control variable from 0 to 1½ inches. Hardened, high-carbon steel blades, spaced two-inches apart, provide more effective overseeding than machines



with three-inch spacing. The blades are reversible and replaceable.

As a seeder, the renovator has a fully-agitated seedbox. A 1½-cubic-foot hopper holds approximately 35 pounds of seed. For optimum incorporation, seed is metered before slicing.

LESCO, Inc., a manufacturer and distributor of turf care products to the lawn care and golf course industries nationwide, is headquartered in Rocky River, Ohio.

For more information, contact Marta E. Geiger, LESCO, Inc., (216) 333-9250. ■

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