

## Industry, environmentalists cooperating

Professional pesticide applicators and environmentalists are cooperating more than in the past, according to some lawn care experts.

"Both groups now realize that there must be some give-and-take. Recent compromises seem to point toward some progress," said Dr. James F. Wilkinson of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America in Marietta, Ga.

In an effort to accommodate requests by people with environmental and health concerns, many applicators now

inform their customers of the exact product mix they will apply and whether any precautions need to be taken during the application. Some applicators, upon request, will notify nearby property owners in advance about any treatments. Nowadays, they also will sometimes post a small sign at the entrance way to treated properties, he said.

A random sampling of members of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America indicates that more and more professional applicators are using pesticides only when and where they are

required.

Many do-it-yourself pesticide users, however, still practice with the 'more is better' attitude, according to the PLCAA.

"We're (PLCAA members) beginning to use more of the newer, less toxic, EPA-registered pesticides," Wilkinson said.

Wilkinson added, "Some of these products require greater customer education and cooperation to achieve good results, but it shows our industry is willing to do what it takes to care for our customers and environment."

## GOVERNMENT UPDATE

### Field-burning

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That intensity remains, with two organizations mobilizing referendums against the field-burning.

Bill Johnson, a 75-year-old retired teacher and founder of End Noxious Unhealthy Fumes, wants to ban the burning immediately,

while Jay Thiele and his Oregonians Against Fuel Burning propose a four-year phaseout.

They each need 65,000 signatures of registered voters on their initiatives by July 3, 1990, in order to get the issue before voters in the November 1990 general election.

Nelson said the Oregon Seed Council will conduct an extensive campaign to educate the public about the industry, and added, "We're going to need \$2 million to \$3 million for an election campaign if it should get on the 1990 ballot."

He said the issue may not get to vote because "there's a much broader understanding of the industry and less animosity exhibited by the public than by the legislature."

Until any future vote and law changes, "status quo" means that 250,000 of Oregon's 345,000 grass seed-producing acres can still be burned.

Yet various people in the industry — from farmers to manufacturers to universities — will "intensify research," Nelson said. For its part, the Seed Council may raise its membership fees and use those extra funds to support that research.

"The industry clearly understands that we have to modify our production process so that we can do it economically without burning," Nelson said. "We're moving as fast as we can toward whatever is available to us."

But, "it's unrealistic to expect a four-year (phaseout) program to discover anything because you basically have only a two- to three-month period to do your work," Nelson said, referring to the harvesting time. "Then you have to wait a year for your next field test. And you have to have the growers pay money to change over their equipment to that technology."

"The seed industry will study and see what we might do in this research. We've got to keep our eye on the goal, which is to continue to grow grass seed with quality and in quantity."

#### The research

Meanwhile, researchers will probe "some engineering possibilities and other kinds of harvesting" to improve the situation, said Oregon State's Young.

"The problem is, all the work hasn't been done," he said. "The issue of disease is a difficult one to research. Like it or not, disease is a kind of epidemiological spread of things... When we evaluate a crop 8- by 20-feet and it looks like it burns all right, we can't sell that result without a little bit of caveat that it's not the same as if you

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