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GOLF COURSE NEWS

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Seed firms: Gov't cost us \$1M

BY MARK LESLIE
Not satisfied with the mere "regrets" of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for a snafu that cost his company \$200,000, Sonny Pennington of Pennington Enterprises Inc. is on the verge of suing the USDA.
Pennington's Madison, Ga., firm is one of seven seed companies that absorbed a total \$1 million loss when 2 million pounds of tall fescue seed imported from Argentina were

found to contain a noxious weed, serrated tussock, and the seed was ordered recalled.
Pennington says he will decide by early August whether he would sue the government, but first he would seek an audience with Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter.
"We're attempting to go through Congress rather than lawyers," Pennington said. "Congressmen work cheaper than lawyers."

"My attorney says that to sue government it's going to cost \$200,000 in attorney fees. I can sue and possibly win \$250,000 and it will cost me \$200,000. That's if we sue for simply our loss. It appears that if we sue — and it appears we probably will have to — we'll sue for loss of reputation, loss of business."
An irate Greg Fennels of Olson Fennels Seed in Oregon, which also absorbed a
Continued on page 15



A 40-acre pond plays a major role in the design and beauty of Rum River Hills Golf Club in Anoka, Minn., which was built for \$600,000 — a figure that included the moderate \$150,000 clubhouse in the background. People like retired farmer Wes Bulen and his partners in the Rum River

Hills venture are finding it is possible to fulfill their dreams — building a golf course — even when faced with today's high land and construction costs. For a look at the boom for builders, read the "Eureka!" stories below and their companion pieces on pages 19-21 inside.

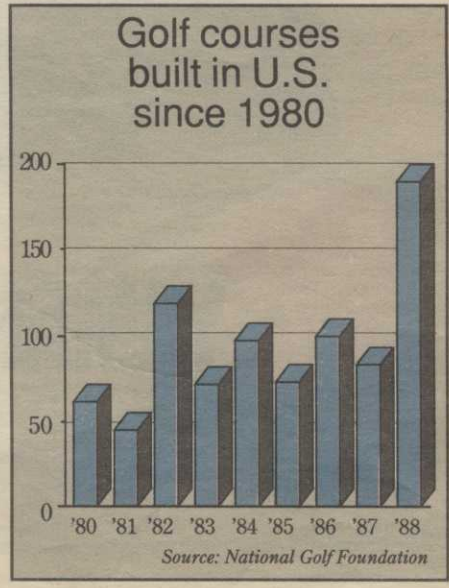
Possible cure found for cricket

BY LARRY KIEFFER
After four years of testing in pastureland by researchers with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, "the most promising biological control agent for mole crickets we have ever had" is ready for field trials at 20 Florida golf courses.
"Everything looks extremely promising as far as finally having something we can brag about," said Bob Rehberg, chairman of the Florida Turfgrass Association's research awards committee.
What Rehberg and the FTGA are bragging about is a Uruguayan nematode that carries a bacterium "at least four times more virulent on the mole cricket than some of the other materials that have been pulled in from commercial organizations."
The microscopic nematode crawls in the mole cricket's mouth, infects it with the lethal bacteria, and then crawls out before the insect dies "within one to several days."
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Eureka! Golf gold being mined

1989 is prime time for nation's builders

BY MARK LESLIE
This is the best of times for golf course builders.
A short while ago, Golf Course Builders Association Executive Director Don Rossi said, "There's no way to buy the land, build a golf course, and make money except to charge exorbitant fees — unless the land is given to you — because the cost of the land is so, so expensive."
Poof! Suddenly real-estate developers are giving the land away to golf course builders because the developers want a golf course to attract home buyers but don't want to get involved in something they're not expert in.
Continued on page 19



Beware snags, but money can be found

BY KATHY BISSELL
Getting a golf course from dream to reality requires at least as many complex maneuvers as getting a team to the Super Bowl. It takes money, talent and time.
Because more people want to play golf, because research reports from groups such as the National Golf Foundation say we need more courses, and because people seem to think there's a lot of money to be made, many individuals and developers want to take the plunge into golf course development.
The difficulties are knowing how to get the funds to start and how to make a project
Continued on page 20

CALENDAR

July

13-17 — 114th convention of the American Association of Nurserymen at the Sheraton and Parkview Hilton hotels in Hartford, Conn. More than 300 vendors will be present, and educational sessions, industry tours and social events are scheduled. For further information contact the American Association of Nurserymen, 1250 I St., N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005; 202-789-2900.

15-17 — The United States Golf

Clubmaker Association, which addresses the varied needs of clubmakers nationally, will meet in Louisville, Ky. More information and an entry form are available from Louisville Golf.

15-17 — Mid-Atlantic Equipment Dealers Association Summer Conference at the Carousel Hotel, on the beach at 118th St., Ocean City, Md. For more information call 1-800-641-0011.

27 — Golf Course Superintendents Association of

New Jersey July meeting at Colonia Country Club in Colonia. The host is Christopher Gaynor, 201-381-3311.

30-Aug. 2 — 44th annual meeting of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. For information telephone 515-289-2331.

August

9 — New England Nurserymen's Association summer meeting hosted by Golf Star Turf Farms in Canterbury, N.H., providing an in-depth look at turf production, a trade show and large equipment displays. For more information contact NENA, 24 West Road, Suite 53, Vernon, Vt. 06066.

2-16 — The annual meeting of the Association of American Seed Control Officials at Hotel Niagara in downtown Niagara Falls, N.Y. For more information contact Ronald Barrett of the New York Department of Agriculture, 1 Winner's Circle, Capitol Plaza, Albany, N.Y., 12235-0001; telephone 518-457-2087.

19 — Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey boat trip, Manasquan and Barnegat Bay, Brielle. Contact Bruce Cadenelli at 201-531-3609.

30 — The annual University of Rhode Island turfgrass field day at

the Turfgrass Research Farm, Plains Road, Kingston, R.I. For more information contact Dr. C.R. Skogley, Plant Sciences Department, Woodward Hall, Kingston, R.I. 02881.

September

19-21 — Royal Windsor '89 Institute of Groundsmanship Sports and Leisure World Trade Exhibition at the Royal Windsor Racecourse in England. Telephone 0908-311856 for information.

October

4-5 — The annual Southern California Turfgrass Expo, devoted to the exhibition of equipment, materials and services for installing and maintaining turfgrass and landscape, at the Orange County Fairgrounds in Costa Mesa. More than 230 manufacturers and distributors will display and demonstrate their goods and services. Bluegrass music and a barbeque are included. For more information contact Chuck and Barbara Wilson at 714-951-8547.

4-6 — Golf Course Europe, an international exhibition and conference on the design, construction and maintenance of golf courses and on golf club management, at Rhein/Main Halls, Wiesbaden, West Germany. For more information contact

Allard J. Hoogland at Expoconsult, P.O. Box 200, 3600 AE Maarsse, Holland; telephone 03465-73777.

25-27 — 1989 Southwest Turfgrass Conference at the Albuquerque (N.M.) Convention Center will include the SWTG Conference, Turf and Ornamental Insect Management Workshop and a golf tournament. For more information contact the Southwest Turfgrass Association at New Mexico State University, P.O. Box 3AE, Las Cruces, N.M. 88003.

November

4 — Lawn Seed Conference at Crown Center Hotel in Kansas City, Mo. For more information contact the American Seed Trade Association, 1030 15th St., N.W., Suite 964, Washington, D.C. 20005.

4-7 — Western Seedsmen's meeting in Kansas City, Kansas.

12-15 — International Irrigation Exposition and Technical Conference in Anaheim, Calif. For information contact Ann Sheridan, Irrigation Association, 1911 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 1009, Arlington, Va. 22209; 703-524-1200.

Please let us know about events you or your organization are planning by writing: Golf Course News, P.O. Box 997, 38 Lafayette St., Yarmouth, Maine 04096.

Lake Nona building villas

Lake Nona Estate, an exclusive golf club community southeast of Orlando (Fla.) International Airport, has introduced Golf Club Villas.

Construction has begun on six homes, and seven of 21 lots have been sold. These first units, starting at \$300,000, are expected to be completed in November.

The Villas, in keeping with Lake Nona's Neo-Georgian style architecture, are being designed by Designline, Inc., and constructed by Christopher Mason Company. Both firms are based in Orlando.

Groups support conclave

Ten technical and educational organizations have endorsed the Irrigation Association's International Irrigation Exposition and Technical Conference Nov. 12-15 at the Anaheim (Calif.) Convention Center.

They are: California Polytechnical University; CLIC; Center for Irrigation Technology (California State University, Fresno); Southern California Turfgrass Council; California Landscape Contractors Association; University of California Cooperative Extension Service; Water Education

Foundation; American Society of Irrigation Consultants; Southern California Golf Course Superintendents; and the California Department of Water Resources.

The IA's Exposition is the world's largest show exclusively for irrigation products and services. More than 400 exhibits will display the latest innovations and technology.

For more information, contact the Irrigation Association at 1911 N. Ft. Myer Dr., Suite 1009, Arlington, Va., 22209; 703-524-1200.

Mole crickets

Continued from page 1
Rehberg said.

In the controlled IFAS study, the nematodes have remained in the soil four years after their release and their effect on mole cricket populations has been detected more than 10 miles from the original release point.

In that study on bahiagrass pastureland which, Rehberg pointed out, is "particularly susceptible" to the dreaded root-eating pest, "the mole cricket populations ... have decreased by about 95 percent and continue to decline as we continue to monitor.

"Grass and trees have recovered from mole cricket damage and mole crickets are no longer an economic problem in these pastures."

The nematode and its lethal bacterium are completely harmless to "all other biological systems," Rehberg said. "All tests

indicate so far that it is very specific."

So now the FTGA, which funded the IFAS research by Dr. Grover Smart with \$45,000 in grants, is going to let 20 members pay \$8,000 each to test the nematode on their golf courses.

"Undoubtedly we'll have more than 20 willing to participate," Rehberg said. "Compared to the alternatives, \$8,000 is practically free."

Mole crickets reportedly cause millions of dollars of damage each year to golf courses in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana and South Carolina.

The problems in testing the nematode under field conditions has not been so much with the organism but with the "delivery system."

The laboratory technique for infecting the mole crickets is difficult, unpleasant and expensive.

Besides, Rehberg said, "the IFAS is not equipped, nor is it in business, to raise large amounts of any biological control agent."

The technique developed by the FTGA involves luring mole crickets to traps filled with nematode-infested sand and then dumping the infected mole crickets on the golf course "where they can go infect other mole crickets before they die," Rehberg said.

"It may take a couple years to get them out there in sufficient numbers to really show you a difference," he said, "but we think it will happen."

Participants in the test will be selected in late summer or early fall.

They will be chosen in such a way as to guarantee a variety of soil and climatic conditions. They will attend a seminar in Gainesville, Fla., before getting their nematodes.



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