

Scotts, Shemin Nurseries join forces

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — The Scotts Company and Shemin Nurseries, Inc., have announced a new agreement between the two companies for the sale and distribution of Scotts Professional products to lawn and landscape maintenance contractors, and other commercial customers. The product line includes a broad mix of fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides and grass seed products.

Each Shemin location will have a technically trained Scotts representative serving that area. In ad-

dition, Scotts' strong R&D will continue to provide new products to the industry and technical support for each location.

With 10 locations in the Northeast, Mid-atlantic, Southeast and Midwest servicing the professional lawn care and landscape, Shemin Nurseries is the largest wholesale distributor of horticultural products in the U.S. For more information about this new alliance, contact Scotts Paulette Grimme at 513-644-0011; or Shemin's Larry Wegman at 203-438-2331.

TMI purchases KWS breeding program

TANGENT, Ore. — Turf Merchants, Inc. (TMI) has announced its purchase of the Turf and Forage Grass Breeding Program from KWS of Einbeck, Germany. The program, carried on by Dr. Fred Ledebauer in Aurora, Ore., has produced such notable varieties as the Bonsai Tall Fescue, Cypress Poa Trivialis, and Patriot II Perennial Ryegrass. Ledebauer will continue to oversee the operation in Aurora.

The purchase of the program happens to coincide with TMI's 10th anniversary.

In a related move, Dr. Mike Richardson has joined TMI as its research director and assistant to Ledebauer. Richardson is a stress psychologist most recently associated with the USDA in Athens, Ga. His primary role will be to introduce combinations of various fungal endophytes into TMI's line of current and experimental varieties.

European market grows in shadow of Asia-Pacific

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up that business, lessening the need for U.S. supplies.

"The saving grace is Toro, Jacobsen, Deere and Ransomes — the home team, so to speak — all have solid distribution networks. And I know Toro, Jake and Deere are working hard to get that business."

Despite the great continental growth, England, Ireland and Scotland still comprise the core of the European golf market. Nearly half the continent's golf courses are located in the United Kingdom, which explains why American firms have always targeted Great Britain when venturing into the European market, said Staples.

But there are cultural distinctions in Britain which make it hard for U.S. companies to justify their investments.

"They maintain their golf courses to different standards," Towne explained. "Not better standards. Not worse. Just different. And those standards simply don't measure up to U.S. conditions. They probably think we overdo it, but it's a problem for suppliers."

Towne noted that golf cars are almost non-existent in England. He also explained that climatically, the biggest problems for English turf are winter diseases while the largest problems for American courses tend to be summer diseases. For example, the number-one turf disease in the U.K. is fusarium or snow mold — which ranks about fifth in the United States, where dollar spot is the number-one problem.

Poa annua management products would sell well in Britain, said Towne, but American product lines are largely geared to American troubleshooting. Further, superintendents' overall technical training and expertise in disease diagnosis is generally lacking in Britain, said Towne.

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Herein lies the irony: Britain has the courses and players, but their idea of "maintenance" won't support the fiscal expectations of many American golf course suppliers. In Europe, where the American maintenance model is more prevalent, there doesn't yet exist the necessary course or player base.

"The golf course supply relative to the population in Britain is very close to that in the United States," said Towne. "And golf has always been a game of the people: You can always plop down five or 10 pounds and play."

"In continental Europe, golf is far more elitist. But that's beginning to change. Half the golfers in Europe are over 50 years old, and that will be the fastest-growing portion of the population over the next 20 years."



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