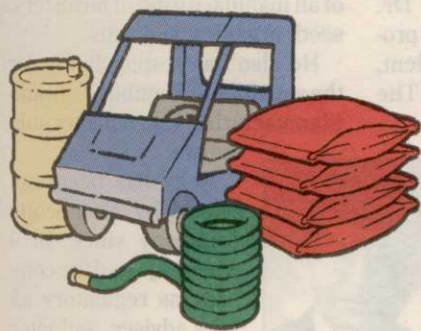


BRIEFS



SPERBER HEADS EII CONSTRUCTION

CALABASAS, Calif. — Richard A. Sperber has been named president and chief operating officer of the Construction Division of Environmental Industries, Inc (EII). In addition, Sperber now holds the title of president of Valley Crest Landscape, Inc., a construction subsidiary of Environmental Industries. Sperber will be responsible for the activities of branch operations in California, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, Texas, Utah, Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas.

NEW FARM MANAGER AT SOUTHERN

OMEGA, Ga. — Southern Turf Nurseries, a part of the Warren's Group, recently promoted Mike Fulghum to the position of Farm Manager at their sod and sprig operation here. Over the past four years, Fulghum has progressed through the ranks at Southern Turf from harvest foreman, to assistant manager, to acting farm manager. In his new position, he is in charge of the production, harvest and distribution of sprigs destined for golf courses, sports stadiums, and landscape contractor jobs throughout the Southeast.



Mike Fulghum

SHIREY JOINS BUCKNER AS VP

FRESNO, Calif. — Buckner, Inc. has announced the appointment of Robert D. Shirey as its vice president of engineering. He will head the company's development of brass valves, sprinklers, impact rotors, and central control systems for golf, commercial, municipal, and residential use. Shirey was formerly the director of engineering for the Chromalox Division of Emerson Electric in Ogden, Utah. He brings considerable experience in product design and development, quality control, and technical support to his new position.



Robert Shirey

WOODS ANNOUNCES NEW 1-800 LINE

OREGON, Ill. — Woods Equipment Co., a producer of tractor-powered attachments, has inaugurated a second 1-800 phone line for its dealers. Effective immediately, the number (1-800-31-WOODS) is available to Woods dealers as a secondary customer service number to be used for detailed product and order inquiries only. Part and whole goods orders continue to be served by Woods' primary customer service fax number: 1-800-399-6637.

Seed Report

PVP legislation pending; VNS issue divisive

By MARK LESLIE

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The national and international negotiations over Plant Variety Protection (PVP) that have sharply divided the American seed industry should be decided later this month, according to sources inside and outside the government.

"We're trying to bring the U.S. law into conformity with the new UPOV [international Union for the Protection of Varieties] treaty," said U.S. Department of Agriculture Plant Variety Protection Office Commissioner Ken Evans said.

The U.S. PVP law was first adopted in 1970 and UPOV was first passed by 21 countries in 1978. UPOV was rewritten in 1991. To be a signatory, the United States must come into compliance with that 1991 version.

The purpose of UPOV is to ensure quality control; truth in advertising, by letting consumers know what they're buying; and enforcement, ensuring the seed in a bag is exactly what its label says. Evans explained that at the request of Sen. Bob Kerry, D-Neb., his department last fall drafted new PVP legislation.

"We hope for passage of a new PVP act by the time of our convention — June 20," said Leslie Cahill, vice president of governmental affairs for the American Seed Trade Association here.

With a Senate vote expected to be in hand in May, "my understanding is that by the end of June, it will be introduced into the House as well," said Tom Salt, plant variety protection examiner with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Once the U.S. law passes the Senate and House, then the Senate can take the final step of ratifying the UPOV treaty

"To enforce the treaty at least five member countries have to submit legislation to

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The new Airborne hover mower from Grass Craft.

NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Grass Craft's American-made hover mower looks for a piece of the market

By HAL PHILLIPS

FALMOUTH, Maine — Hover mowers have been around for some time, but American-made hover mowers were non-existent — until now.

Grass Craft, a 3-year-old firm headquartered here, has introduced the Airborne Mower, a hovering grass cutter marketed exclusively to golf courses throughout the United States. The Airborne is sold directly or through a dealer network with a one-year guarantee, according to Wayne Hughes, president of Grass Craft.

"We're going through a variety of dealerships primarily dealing with golf courses," said Hughes. "Some are John Deere dealers. Some are

Toro dealers; some Jacobsen. It's a cross-section of commercial distributors.

"In areas where we don't have distributors, we'll sell direct. We have an 800 number [1-800-883-2887]."

Two English firms — Flymo and Allen — have cornered the market on hover mowers for years. But Hughes is convinced there is market share to be had.

"I spent three months finding out whether there was a market," he said. "It was my impression that Flymo had pulled back to England, and there was demand here. If we made a good hover mower, people would buy it."

"We did about 450 units domestically last year. I want to get to 5,000 units a

Continued on page 38

Madrid Golf Show set for November

MADRID — The sixth Madrid International Golf Show 1994, the main golf exhibition in southern Europe, will be held here at the Casa de Campo Exhibition Centre from Nov. 17-20.

This commercial/industry show drew 13,300 people last year, including 1,200 trade visitors, according to show organizer GEASA S.L. Exhibitors can purchase a 12-meter by 12-meter booth space for 214,200 Spanish pesetas (or US\$1,565 plus VAT).

The Madrid International Golf Show is run in concert with the fourth annual Golf Technical Workshop, Nov. 17-19.

The superintendents session will be run collaboratively by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and the Spanish Greenkeepers Association.

The session for club managers will be run jointly by the Spanish Club Managers Association and the Club Managers Association of America.

For more information, contact Emmanuel Dubos at 341-350-1564. or fax at 341-350-6866.



GOLF COURSE EUROPE, NOV. 29-DEC. 1

PARIS — The sixth annual Golf Course Europe Exhibition and Conference will be held at the Parc Floral here from Nov. 29 through Dec. 1, 1994. For more information on the exhibition and conference, contact Charles Duff at P.O. Box 7720, Berkeley, CA 94707; or call 510-526-6922; or fax 510-526-5387.

Kirby Markers sold to Witco Industries

CARMEL, Calif. — Jack Kirby, inventor and chairman of the board of Kirby Markers, Inc., has announced he has sold his company to Witco Industries, a Delaware Corporation. The terms of the sale were not disclosed.

Witco Industries, Inc. announced it will move the company from here to Carlsbad, Calif., by the end of April. The Kirby Marker System will be manufactured by Plastics Engineering and Development, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary. The company will be located at 6108 Avenida Encinas, Carlsbad, California 92009. The new telephone number will be 1-800-925-4729.

Kirby will remain a consultant to the company, and Sales and Marketing Manager Buster Newton will assume the same position with the new company.

PVP legislation

Continued from page 37

conform to it," said Salt. "As of today, nobody has."

The major split in the seed industry is over Variety Not Stated (VNS).

The industry "has spent a good deal of time discussing VNS issues," Cahill said. "We've had serious, frank and candid discussions. The industry is split 50-50."

The new UPOV treaty "clearly states if you have a name and protected variety, you are to use it under all circumstances," she said.

Yet, one of the common methods of marketing turfgrass in surplus years is by VNS. If a company walks away from its contract with a grower, the grower sells the seed as VNS. Or, if a contracted field of proprietary grass gets "contaminated" with another type of grass and the buyer nixes the deal, again that seed goes to the marketplace as VNS.

There are three viewpoints:

- The seed companies': It's their proprietary seed, yet the company gets no royalty from its sale.

- The seed grower's: He has devoted a growing season to that acreage of turf seed and he needs to earn some money from it.

- The ultimate buyer: In the case of VNS, he has no idea what he is buying.

"We're split right down the middle. The owners voted and the good guys lost by one percent," said Tee-2-Green President Bill Rose, who supports the PVP legislation.

"People are simply not informed enough to make a logical decision," he said. "Varieties all have names and the names should be used. The consumer deserves to know what he's buying. Volume seed packets say: 'Contains 30 percent ryegrass, 30 percent Kentucky bluegrass and maybe fine fescue.' In this day and age all varieties have names. Some are good for turf and some are not, and the consumer has no way of knowing it."

In a scenario spelled out by Seed Research of Oregon Marketing Director Skip Lynch, farmers are actually blending named varieties, harvesting them and selling them as VNS.

"They are essentially stealing the research those companies have put into it and selling it off as VNS," Lynch said.

Lynch agreed that in some cases companies have abused growers by not buying the seeds and thus leaving them no option other than to sell it on the open market as VNS.

"A lot of this problem should be taken up in contract law. Instead they put into this revision of the PVP law," he said.

Another reason for the United States to pass VNS laws, Rose said, is that "Europe and New Zealand consider the U.S. a dumping ground for their off-grade seed. They can sell it as VNS and

it may be a forage variety. It goes into discount or volume lawn mixes."

Most of the bigger seed companies have supported the PVP legislation, according to Lynch. "The growers have to a certain extent been against it. Some companies that operate more borderline as brokers have been against it."

So why worry about signing on to the new UPOV?

"It offers you reciprocal rights," Cahill said. "We'll have the same rights in France as they do here, so no one is at a disadvantage."

The 21 member countries are

the most industrialized and "our basic competitors," she said.

"If the U.S. wants to remain competitive nationally, we want to join," Salt agreed.

When the previous UPOV was passed, the United States actually was not in full compliance, but the other countries "looked the other way," said Leah Brillman, research director of Seed Research of Oregon. "They let it [lack of VNS coverage] go through because the farm groups put up such a fuss. But who knows if they'll let it go this time if we don't meet all the standards?"

Foley-PLP names Roberts new president

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Kenneth D. Roberts has been named president of Foley-PLP Company. The announcement was made by Walter Ringer, chairman of the company's parent, Foley-Belsaw.

Before joining Foley-PLP, Roberts was vice president and GM of the after-market division of

Valeo Engine Cooling, Inc. in Jamestown, N.Y. Roberts held several sales, marketing and human resources positions before joining Armstrong Tire and Rubber 12 years ago.

Through a series of mergers, Armstrong and Valeo became affiliated and Roberts moved to Valeo in 1986.



Kenneth Roberts



WHAT'S MISSING FROM THIS PICTURE?

First, all the golfers who played their best, thanks to CATO Creeping Bentgrass. Next, all the overworked maintenance folks no longer needed for extra irrigation chores. Finally, the usual bevy of grass doctors in search of the almighty Dollar Spot, Pythium blight and Brown Patch.

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CATO'S improved tolerance to heat and drought means less syringing, susceptibility to disease and fungicide use. To golfers and superintendents, it means the greens are true. Good putters make more shots on a green that's much easier to read, where the ball rolls more consistently and sticks with a pitch or wedge.

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