

BRIEFS

EPA looking to streamline label review process

By PETER BLAIS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Environmental Protection Agency plans to accelerate or eliminate its review of many changes to pesticide labeling and formulas, according to EPA spokesman John Kasper.

The streamlined procedures could affect as many as 750 of the 5,000 pesticide registration amendments made each year, Kasper said. Most of the amendments concern labeling (such as changing to an alternative brand name) or altering product composition (such as the addition of dyes and fragrances).

"If EPA can establish procedures and guidelines that everyone understands so that products aren't submitted that don't qualify for the quicker procedures, then it could really speed up the process. That would be great," Ciba Product Manager Jose Milan said.

The proposed policy cuts EPA's review process in half, from 90 days to 45 days, for certain minor pesticide registration amendments.

At the same time, the notice expands the range of pesticide registration amendments that can be accomplished by simply notifying the agency without approval.

It also increases those amendments about which the agency need not be notified.

Companies using the notification process need to sign a certification statement pledging the amendments are in compliance with EPA regulations, including public health protection.

"[This] action demonstrates that our process for handling changes in pesticides registration can truly be cleaner for our environment, cheaper for the taxpayer and industry, and smarter for America's future," EPA Deputy Director Fred Hansen said.

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JACOBI TO REP ISK IN SOUTHEAST

MENTOR, Ohio — Jim Jacobi has joined ISK Biosciences Corp., the manufacturer of agricultural and specialty chemical products, as Southeast Turf & Ornamental specialist. Jacobi is a recent graduate of Auburn University. Jacobi will be responsible for the commercial development and sales support of ISK's turf and ornamental products and experimental compounds in the Southeast. He reports to Dr. M. Howard Thomas, North America commercial development manager.

CYANAMID SENDS SUPER TO SCOTLAND

WAYNE, N.J. — Tony Gustaitis, CGCS at Whitmarsh Valley Country Club in Lafayette Hill, Pa., will visit the birthplace of golf this summer courtesy of American Cyanamid Co., makers of Pendulum pre-emergent herbicide, Image herbicide, Amdro fire ant bait and Pendimethalin. Gustaitis won the expense-paid trip for two to Scotland at the GCSAA Conference & Show in February. "I never thought people really won drawings like this," exclaimed the seven-year Whitmarsh employee, who credits his wife with urging him to enter.

KOERNER TO LEAD SI'S FIBERMESH

CHICKAMAUGA, Ga. — Synthetic Industries, Inc., the second-largest manufacturer of technical polypropylene fabrics and fibers in the world, announces the formation of the Construction/Civil Engineering Products Group under the leadership of C. Ted Koerner. This new group will be composed of SI's Fibermesh Division and Geosynthetic Products Division (formerly Construction Products Division).



Ted Koerner

HARGROVE JOINS PURSELL

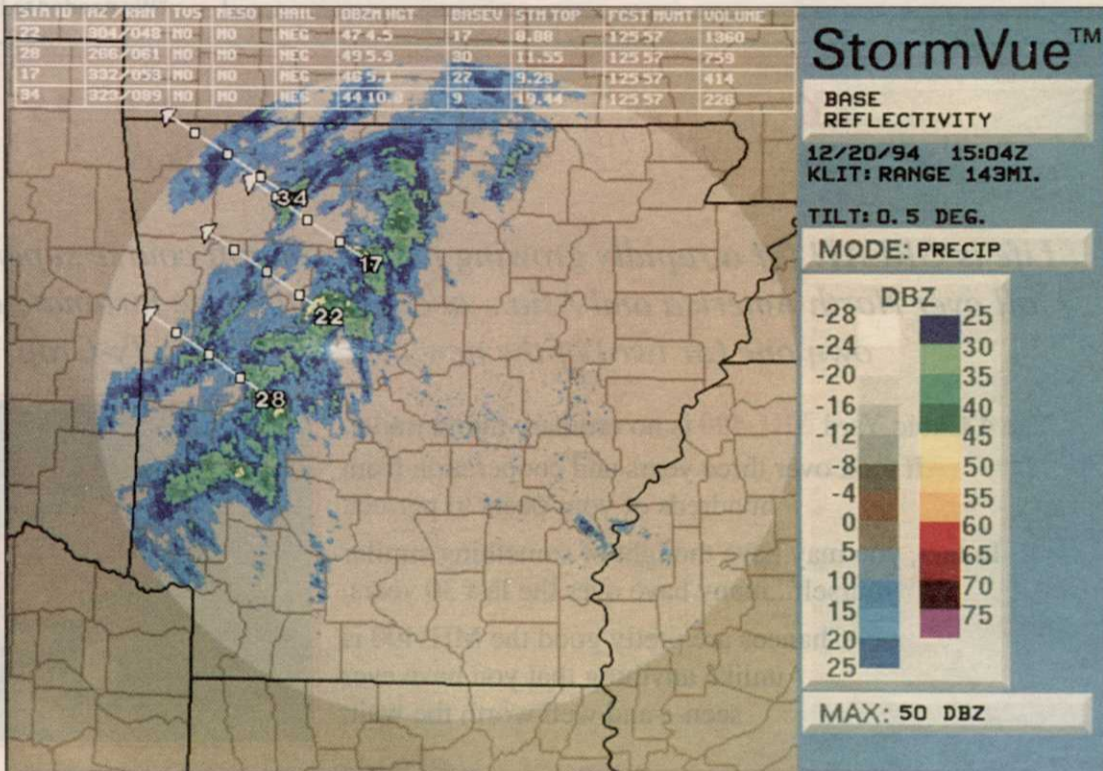
SYLACAUGA, Ala. — Pursell Industries, Inc., has announced the employment of Garry Hargrove, PhD. Hargrove, formerly director of product development at Grace-Sierra in Milpitas, Calif., will assist in fulfilling Pursell's goal to lead the market worldwide in controlled-release fertilizer and related technologies development.



Garry Hargrove

NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Accu-Weather, Inc. has announced the availability of its proprietary StormVue Nexrad Dopplerradar product, which is designed to predict where thunderstorms will go and indicate future storm locations (boxes along the storm track show future storm positions at 15-minute intervals). StormVue can be overlaid onto any of the 20 color graphic Nexrad Doppler radar products from any of the 88 Nexrad sites available from Accu-Weather. For more information, call Accu-Weather at 814-237-0309. For more new products, see page 42.



Study should lead to Bermudagrass certification in Fla.

By PETER BLAIS

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Developing a certification program for vegetative Bermudagrass to ensure that Florida golf courses receive only top-quality turf from suppliers is the eventual goal of a two-year, \$66,000 study funded by two of the state's major golf industry associations.

The study, which begins this summer at University of Florida laboratories in Gainesville and Fort Lauderdale, will attempt to distinguish the desired strains of Tifway and Tifdwarf (the two most common grasses found on Florida courses) in terms of chromosome count, morphological (physical) attributes and DNA analysis.

The Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association and Florida Turfgrass Association (FTA) are splitting the cost of the project. The two associations will share the findings with the 10 or so major Bermudagrass suppliers, who will hopefully use the information to eradicate off-type strains from their fields.

The undesirable grasses often have different densities, color and wear tolerance than the desired strains of Tifway and Tifdwarf. When mixed with pure strains, the unwanted characteristics of off-type grasses can result in inconsistent ball roll, higher maintenance costs and



disappointed golfers.

"That can have major ramifications for the superintendent, employees and golfers," said Kevin Downing, research chairman for the Florida GCSA and head superintendent at Willoughby Golf Club in Stuart. David Barnes of Greg Norman Turf Co. represents the FTA.

"Six months into the program, we'll call the major growers together and give them an idea of what direction the research seems to be taking. We want to make sure they have time to react to the program rather than just dumping the results in their laps two years from now.

"It's frustrating for them to grow a crop and not get what they or the superintendents expected. The extra scrutiny will probably drive up Bermudagrass prices somewhat. But it's in their [suppliers'] and our [superintendents'] best interests

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Burlingham, Pickseed West penalized for alleged mislabeling

FOREST GROVE, Ore. — Civil penalties amounting to \$110,000 have been imposed against two Oregon grass seed dealers following allegations of product mislabeling, according to reports in the Portland-based Oregonian newspaper.

E.F. Burlingham & Sons of Forest Grove paid a \$100,000 penalty, and Pickseed West Inc. of Talent paid a \$10,000 penalty stemming from an investigation by the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Both firms have signed court documents stating they will not violate unlawful trade practice laws in the future. Neither company admitted wrongdoing.

As part of the settlement, E.F. Burlingham & Sons had its state license to sell seeds suspended for 30 days starting May 20.

State inspectors alleged the Burlingham firm on several occasions from 1992 to 1994 labeled its own varieties of tall fescue seeds as Kentucky 31, a nonproprietary seed which has greater popularity in some markets.

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Public-access Poolsbrook a testament to industry growth

By HAL PHILLIPS

KIRKVILLE, N.Y. — “Wow! That’s a lot of golf courses.” That was Ruth Taylor’s reaction when informed that the course her family owns and operates had been recognized as the nation’s 15,000th golf facility. And considering the phenomenal growth of public-access golf in the 1990s, it’s fitting that America’s 15,000th course be a family-run, daily-fee operation catering to the average player.

“We did it ourselves, with our son and son-in-law,” explained Taylor, one of five family members who played a role in the development and operation of Poolsbrook Golf Course, a nine-hole track which opened here, 20 miles east of Syracuse, on April 1.

“My husband, Warren, had been talking about doing this for about 25 years. Last year, he developed some cancer. [The doctors] got it out, so we decided to go for it. We had the land. It’s been in my husband’s family for three generations.

“My husband designed the course. We dug it up, dug the trenches, put the irrigation system in. And we mow it ourselves. We have a small clubhouse with a snack bar. My daughter [Karen Furbeck] and I take care of everything inside, while the boys do everything outside.”

At the urging of *Golf Course News*, the Jupiter, Fla.-based National Golf Founda-



tion (NGF) determined Poolsbrook GC was No. 15,000 after painstakingly poring over its records this spring.

When the first quarter of 1995 came to a close, the NGF determined there were 14,972 operating in the United States. Spring is a busy time for golf course open-

ings and Poolsbrook’s early April opening was perfectly timed.

However, the emergence of Poolsbrook is but one piece of a larger trend in the U.S. golf course industry. While nearly 2,000 courses have opened since 1990 — a record pace — a full 80 percent are daily-fee, municipal or resort. Over the same period, the number of private golf courses has actually declined by more than 7 percent.

Private clubs will never disappear, but developers have realized the demographics of the U.S. golfing population have changed. As Baby Boomers get older, the long-term profit potential at public-access golf courses will become even more pronounced.

The Taylors — as developers and operators of Poolsbrook — have seen it for themselves.

“We have a lot of senior citizens who play it, and they love it because they can walk it,” Taylor explained. “We want to have tournaments to get people to bring their wives, stuff like that. We really want this place to be one where the average golfer and family can come out and play.

“We just built a huge patio and barbecue pit so we can have big picnics. We have four leagues that play here every week. And we have 15 members. You have to start somewhere... Next year I want to start a junior league, for little kids. No teenagers. Just smaller kids. We need to get them started.”

Green fees at Poolsbrook, which boasts views of the Erie Canal, are \$6 for nine holes on weekdays, \$7 on weekends. Business has been good, said Taylor. But this is clearly a labor of love for the Taylors.

Warren and son James Furbeck both work at a local bus service until 3 p.m. each day, then head to the course where they assume their maintenance duties. Warren handles the greens, James cuts the fairways, and son-in-law Chris Meloling mows the tees and rough.

The club was nearly named Deer Run because of the wild deer on the property.

“But we went with Poolsbrook because that’s the name of the road,” Ruth said. “It has worked out well because we’ve had a couple of people show up and tell us they wouldn’t have found us if the street hadn’t been Poolsbrook.”

It could also affect how superintendents interact with members.

“A few years ago, I remember Stuart Leventhal [superintendent at Interlachen Country Club] commenting to me that his members were concerned that the greens had deteriorated and weren’t putting as well as they used to,” Downing stated in his study proposal.

“Obviously they had mutated to an unmanageable level and, no matter what he did, he could not maintain the level of maintenance of past years. Just think how much easier his job would have been if he could utilize DNA results to prove to the membership that there was a variety of grasses on the surfaces and it was now time to think about replanting.”

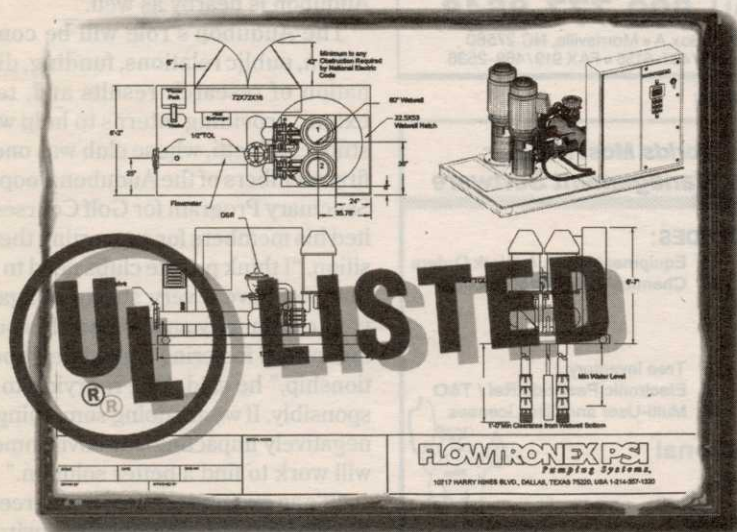
Penn State University’s Dr. David Huff, a molecular biologist and former turfgrass breeder, will interpret the data from the DNA fingerprinting on a quarterly basis to help steer the program in the proper direction.

The bulk of the money is ticketed for research on putting surfaces, although a portion will also go toward studying fairway Bermudagrass, Downing said.

Another First

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Certified Bermuda?

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to have quality grass.”

No one knows how off-types infest courses. Some likely originate from contaminated sprig stock when the course was planted, according to the University of Florida researchers who will lead the study, i.e. Charlie Guy, Al Dudeck, Nigel Harrison and Philip Busey. Some off-types may be spontaneous mutations. Undoubtedly, the mutations and common Bermudagrass are redistributed onto greens by golfers’ shoes, golf car tires and mower parts.

How might the research affect how superintendents and suppliers do business? Say a superintendent on a new course helped select a grass before it was planted. He would get a report on the chromosome, morphological and DNA characteristics of the grass before it was put in the ground. Then he could hold back a portion of the cost until the turf was retested after planting to make sure that what he got is what he ordered.