

Simplot's Burk weighs in on fertilizer market shake up

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Burk: We have to have the capabilities to support a distribution network whether it is Turf Partners or independent distribution, so we are going to be looking at that.

Of course we recognize that there are a lot more combination products in the turf market in the Midwest and the East than

we sell or have a demand for in the West. We are going to have to look at getting the capabilities and the products to support those markets. I don't know just what level of production that we are going to go into, but we are going to have to add production, packaging and distribution capabilities.

GCN: What is your reaction to

the Scotts/Andersons deal? How will it shape Simplot's business strategy?

Burk: Any time a No. 1 decides to exit the business, it sends shock waves through the industry. We haven't sat down and really tried to assess the pluses and minuses. Andersons is a good company and they are capable of picking up some of

the pieces, but can they pick up all of them? I don't know. They have to step up now and be a national player and that's going to present some real issues to them.

From our perspective, it probably accelerates our plan...it puts a little more pressure on us to move more quickly than originally intended.

GCN: Many industry watchers say this is just the first wave of

consolidation, do you agree?

Burk: You are going to see continued consolidation in the industry. It is fairly young in that process. You are going to see regional players join up or fall out with others. There is also going to be more alignment of technologies. We are very anxious to look at those [opportunities].

GCN: Are regional players positioning themselves with that in mind?

Burk: I would think so. I mean, hey, we were a regional company. You have to think about how you are going to continue to compete as companies get bigger. If you remain static, you are losing ground and the consolidation will take place around you and then you will have a difficult time competing.

GCN: What is Simplot's game plan going forward?

Burk: The next year will be real interesting. Everyone is trying to size things up and see how to go about taking advantage of this opportunity.

We have a lot of resources. We have big-time fertilizer manufacturing and seed capabilities and you throw in Pursell's controlled-release technology and that's pretty strong. Depending on the Turf Partners relationship, we will be involved in the resale chemical business as well. Simplot has the capabilities to go to the big chemical people and align ourselves, and that is what we will be trying to do. We are going to carry a broad line of products.

To be honest we would like to grow this business four to five times in the next two to five years... It is an aggressive plan but we expect to be able to do it. ▽



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Broyhill snags Yazoo-Kees turf

DAKOTA CITY, Neb. — Broyhill Inc. has acquired the turf assets business of Yazoo-Kees, based in Chetek, Wis. The company will consolidate all operations to the Dakota City facilities.

Yazoo-Kees' primary turf products include a self-propelled bunker rake, several powered greens brushes, spiker/roller and spiker seeders, a turf vehicle plus other optional equipment accessories.

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