

Pure Seed attacked

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with a butterfly."

Pure Seed Testing is owned by Bill Rose, who also owns Turf-Seed Inc. He said his company will have to absorb the loss because insurance covered only seed and seed stock, not experimental plants.

E-MAIL COMMUNIQUE

In an e-mail communique to the company and media outlets, the Anarchist Golfing Association wrote that "the biotech industry usually hides behind the racist aura of feeding the Third World. But as you can see, these crops are grown for profit and the pleasure of the rich and have no social value."

The message continued: "Grass, like industrial culture, is invasive and permeates every aspect of our lives. While the golf trade journals claim that golf courses provide suitable habitat for wildlife, we see them as a destroyer of all things wild."

The anarchist group apparently believed that Pure Seed was conducting genetic engineering work on grasses, Fricker said. "The irony of it is that those were all naturally bred grasses they destroyed, having nothing at all to do with genetic work," she said.

"We were doing one risk-assessment project to determine if it's wise or safe to introduce genetically altered grasses into the environment," she added. "And in fact, our data were showing that we should not have open-pollinated transgenic bentgrass, and that we need to go towards something like male sterility, so that the gene won't be carried in the pollen. That's what they attacked - the research that would have proven their point, and maybe stopped some of this."

"We were the only company doing that sort of research," Fricker said. "There are some companies producing genetically altered products without doing the research. In our opinion, she said, "they hit the wrong place and shut down something I think they might have supported."

Fricker seemed particularly disheartened by the loss of her research work on experimental varieties of grasses. The vandals destroyed a strain of tall fescue that survives a low pH factor, she said. They hit another tall fescue that is resistant to brown-patch disease - a major disease in the Southeast and even in California. They also ruined a salt-tolerant perennial rye grass and a creeping fescue that was naturally tolerant to Roundup.

"We'd been working on some of these things for six years," Fricker said.

Researcher follows anti-golf groups

Barry Clausen, a specialist in eco-terrorism, said there are several groups in the country that see golf courses as "an evil." Clausen, of Redding, Calif., has written a book, soon to be released, called "Burning Rage - The Growing Anger Within My Country." He said the movement is led by people "who think all mining is bad, all logging is bad, all golfing is bad. They recruit high school and college kids, who get brainwashed, and the result is the kind of destruction you see at Pure Seed."



A golf enthusiast himself, Clausen said the attackers "probably didn't care that no genetic research was going on. It's about sabotaging golf courses. They hate golf courses, because in order to build them you have to tear up natural areas."

According to Clausen, golf courses have been on the eco-terrorism hit list since 1995, when the *Earth First! Journal* advocated sabotaging courses and described how to do it.

"There are numerous courses across the country where they have blown up the greens," he said. "At one resort in

Washington state, they tore up nine greens and then put a stink bomb in the ventilation system during a convention. There was also a bombing on the PGA Tour, in Akron, Ohio, where a bomb went off in a trash can and two people were injured. PGA officials said a kid had thrown an M-80 in there, but it was a bomb. I got the reports from Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms."

In the 1995 *Earth First! Journal* article, entitled "Golf Course Maintenance," readers were told that golf "is the sport of the aristocrat and the poser aristocrat." Among the "tips" offered by the anonymous author were these:

- "Forget all that you've heard about pouring gasoline or Roundup on the greens. Don't even bother carving up the tees or stealing golf carts. Just cut off that IV from the aquifer." It detailed exactly how to destroy irrigation systems.

- "Hit the greens first, and repeatedly."

— Jay Finegan

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