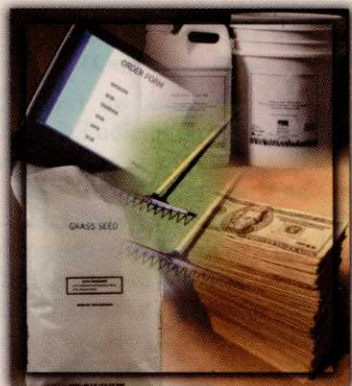


GRASS SEED



BRIEFS

TYLER TO EXPAND DISTRIBUTION NETWORK, HIRES FILLEY

ELWOOD, Ill. — Tyler Enterprises of Elwood Inc. has recently hired Craig Filley as director, strategic development, a newly created position to spearhead their expansion of the company's fertilizer partnership and distribution network. Filley will be responsible for establishing new distribution and developing partnerships outside of Tyler's current regional sales base that includes Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Filley recently served as the senior technical representative for The Andersons, developing and servicing regional and national distribution accounts.



Craig Filley

PENNINGTON APPOINTS LOHSE, KLECZYNSKI

MADISON, Ga. — Pennington Seed, Inc. has appointed Charles W. Lohse as western territory manager and Stanley J. Kleczynski as southeastern territory manager for the Professional Turfgrass Group. Lohse and



Stanley J. Kleczynski

Kleczyński will be responsible for the sales and marketing of Pennington's professional turfgrass varieties through a network of distributors in the Western and Southeastern United States, respectively. Lohse is a past president of the California Seed Association and Kleczynski is a past director of the Southern Seedsman Association and the Kentucky Seedsman Association.

TEXTRON GOLF NAMES HYLAND CEO

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products has named Gregory E. Hyland chairman and CEO. Hyland will have responsibility for the continued integration and operations of this unit which was created earlier this year. Hyland joins Textron from Tyco International where he was president of the flow control division's engineered products group.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Yamaha expands national reach with high-tech service trucks

By ANDREW OVERBECK

NEWNAN, Ga. — In an effort to increase its ability to service golf car fleet customers in out-of-the way areas, Yamaha Golf Cars has unveiled a system of global positioning satellite (GPS)-linked service trucks that offer the same capabilities as its dealerships.

"We have a dealer and service network across the country," said Dan Grigsby, national service manager. "But there are many courses out there that are not covered by those dealers. The whole premise of the program is to take care of customers that are in an area where the dealer cannot provide service."

The advent of the service truck program also allows Yamaha, which depends on fleet sales for 80 to 90 percent of its business, to expand sales opportunities. "Our goal was to identify where we had potential customers and give our sales people the opportunity to sell cars where ever they can. Then we can determine which areas are big enough to put in a service truck," Grigsby said.

So far, Yamaha has 15 service trucks in Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, eastern Tennessee, Texas, Oklahoma and Florida and will be adding trucks in Arkansas and California. The trucks are staffed by a technician who regularly ser-

vices between 15 and 20 courses and visits each course once a month. The technicians work out of a home office when they are not on the road.

TRUCKS ROLL OUT FULLY STOCKED

Each Chevrolet 14-foot box truck is equipped with a complete line of tools, a \$15,000 parts inventory, a service area, and an office. The service technician has a laptop that is linked to the Yamaha



One of Yamaha's 15 new GPS-equipped service trucks

vice home office that allows him to open and create repair and part orders. When the technician closes an order, Yamaha has the ability to order, bill and send parts within 24 hours.

"They can do all the maintenance work and 95 percent of the major repairs," Grigsby said. "They have a spare engine, transmission assembly and two sets of batteries. They can do just about everything right there on site."

The GPS system on the truck allows the technician to communicate with a

Continued on page 33

Pennington acquires Lofts and Rebel varieties

LAFAYETTE, Calif. — Central Garden & Pet Co. has announced that its Pennington subsidiary has reached agreement with KRB Seed Co., LLC to acquire certain assets and licensing rights with respect to Lofts and Rebel facilities and products.

Under the agreements, Pennington will acquire substantially all of the assets of the Lofts group with facilities in Woburn, Mass., Laurel, Md., and Farmingdale, N.J. In addition, Pennington will be granted exclusive rights to the Lofts related trademarks and sales marks. Pennington will also be granted certain non-exclusive rights to produce and market Rebel seed varieties. Other terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

"The Lofts brand is established and well respected in the Northeast. We will continue their tradition and supplement their customer offerings with other Pennington/Central branded products. In addition, we plan to expand the presence of the Rebel varieties in several key accounts," said Brooks Pennington III, president of Pennington Seed.

According to KRB Seed Company president, Ken Budd, the

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Walter assumes marketing and development post at Rohm and Haas



PHILADELPHIA, Pa. — Rohm and Haas Co. has named chemical engineer James Walter, Ph.D. to the post of market and product development manager for turf and ornamental products. Walter, who has been with the company since 1997, previously served as turf and ornamental product development manager and global product development manager. In his new role, Walter will be responsible for marketing strategies, research and product development. Golf Course News recently caught up with Walter to discuss his goals for the business unit and how it will fit into the increasingly consolidating turf and ornamental marketplace.



James Walter

GCN: What are your immediate goals for the turf and ornamental business unit?

Walter: I have worked as product development manager for turf and orna-

mental for the last four years, so I know the business, the market and the products. My expectations are to continue the growth of the business and to grow our position in the marketplace.

GCN: How will you accomplish this growth?

Walter: The fundamental way I am going to do that is through new products and new formulations. As a technical person I am bent that way. We have a number of new technologies and formulations that will hit the market in the next three to four years that are going to solve problems that lawn care industry and golf course superintendents have.

GCN: What are some of examples of the new technologies and formulations?

Walter: For example, one of the

Continued on page 32

Aventis to spin off crop science division

STRASBOURG, France — The life-science group Aventis SA has announced that it intends to sell its \$3.5-billion agrochemicals and plant health products division by the end of 2001 to concentrate solely on its pharmaceutical business.

Aventis CropScience, which is already operating as an independent company, was formed a year ago by the merger between Hoechst Schering Agro and Rhone Poulenc Agro. The subsidiary's Environmental Science division manufactures turf fungicides, herbicides, insecticides and plant growth regulators, including the popular Chipco and DeltaGuard brands.

The company, which will be renamed Agreva, will either be launched on the stock exchange or sold outright. According to analysts, Germany's Bayer AG, which recently bought Novartis' FLINT fungicide business, is the front runner to buy Aventis CropScience, although both Dupont and Dow Chemical may also be interested.

CARLSBAD, Calif. — California's two leading companies in the turf equipment and irrigation business have merged to create a statewide company, Turf Star. California Turf Products and West Star Distribution have united operations to cover the entire state of California and the Baja Peninsula.

California Turf, founded in 1987, focused its operation in the Southern California market, while West

Leading California distributors merge to create Turf Star

Star, founded in 1978, operated in Northern California.

"The merger confirms our commitment to be the leading statewide resource for specialized equipment and irrigation systems for landscape and large turf areas," said Leonard Gregory, president of Turf Star and previous

owner of California Turf.

The company will operate from its five existing service locations: Hayward, Rancho Cordova, Brea, Vista, and Bermuda Dunes.

Turf Star is the distributor for Toro's golf irrigation, commercial equipment, landscape contractor equipment, siteworks systems and

consumer products divisions and is the statewide dealer for Club Car's Carryall utility vehicles. The company also represents Cushman, Kawasaki, Ty-Crop, Express Dual, Foley, and Verti Drain.

"Because we stock products at all locations, our customers will have access to faster turnaround and better logistics," said Gregory. "Our expanded size will also give us the purchasing power we need to deliver value in the marketplace."

Walter Q&A

Continued from page 31

problems that we recognized with the Dimension EC formulation is that it is solvent-based, and periodically we would get complaints that applicators did not like the odor of the product. Also, because of the volatility of the formulation, we had to apply more active agent per acre. So we worked to develop a formulation that didn't have solvent odor, didn't stain and that had higher unit activity to reduce volatility.

We came up with two new formulations. Dimension Ultra WSP is coming to market this year and is a wettable formulation of *dithiopyr*. There is no odor and it is easy to handle. The second generation product came from the paint industry. We came up with a micro-encapsulated formulation of *dithiopyr*, which eliminates solvents and gives high activity per acre. We can also program the micro-encapsulated formula to extend the residual activity of the product.

GCN: How will you combine your research background with your new marketing responsibilities?

Walter: We are always looking for needs and problems in the marketplace and finding ways to meet and solve them. We have a distribution approach to end users and I talk to distributors and customers and have round tables to learn what their problems are. With the Dimension Ultra, we ran demonstration programs through distributors and customers to let them use the product and get feedback from them. We do the same thing with academic researchers to get hard and fast data to support use of our products.

GCN: Going forward, what is your marketing strategy?

Walter: With consolidation and a lot of the major companies getting even bigger, a lot of them are taking a strategy of selling directly to customers. We are committed to distribution because we think our distributors add value to our products and service. We have 62 distributors nationwide and more than 1,000 sale people out there to keep in touch with. We meet with distributors on a yearly basis to get feedback and do training.

GCN: Amid all of the consolidation, where does Rohm and Haas fit in?

Walter: We think consolidation will give us an advantage because larger companies will be forced to ignore smaller opportunities in the marketplace. And that is what Rohm and Haas does very well. With our ability to be creative in problem solving, we think we can do very well going after the smaller opportunities and niches within the turf and ornamental marketplace. ■



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