

Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

Business briefs

Bayer Acquires Compass

Bayer Professional Products recently acquired Compass fungicide from Novartis, which recently merged with Zeneca Professional Products to form Syngenta.

Kansas City, Mo.-based Bayer holds all patents, marketing authorizations, trademarks, and production and formulation expertise for the strobilurin-based fungicide line.

Toro, Disney extend, expand agreement

Bloomington, Minn.-based Toro Co. and Lake Buena Vista-based Walt Disney World have extended and expanded their agreement to make Toro the "official turf and irrigation company" of Walt Disney's Resort.

The new agreement applies to most Walt Disney World properties, including five championship golf courses. Disney will use Toro mowers, utility vehicles, irrigation systems and trimming products.

The Toro-Disney pact began in 1996 when it was announced that Toro would provide turf and irrigation expertise for Disney's then new Wide World of Sports complex. Details of the extension were not announced.

Deere receives ISO 9000 Certification

The John Deere Turf Care facility in Raleigh, N.C., recently received ISO 9000 certification. ISO 9000 is a voluntary system in framing procedures for manufacturing quality and is administered by the International Organization of Standardization in Geneva, Switzerland. The standards for manufacturing facilities cover multiple elements, from paperwork and tracking systems to parts inventory and the assembly process.

To Tell the Truth

SCOTTS FIGHTING MYTHS ABOUT GENETICALLY MODIFIED TURF

The product is still at least three years from the market, but the Scotts Co. is already waging a quiet communications war to combat myths about its plans to introduce Roundup Ready bentgrass to golf.

Even at this early stage, the Marysville, Ohio-based company is actively gauging superintendents' in-



Herbicide-tolerant Kentucky bluegrass (right) shows no effects from the same spray that killed greenhouse controlled Kentucky bluegrass.

terest in the concept, addressing concerns about the politics of genetically modified turf and attempting to counter what it feels is disinformation being spread by competitors.

In an effort to set the record straight, *Golfdom's* Pat Jones sat down with the man leading the charge for Roundup Ready turf, Bob Harriman, Scotts vice president of biotechnology.

Golfdom: Let's get right to the bottom line. Suppose I'm a superintendent. What's in it for me?

Harriman: First and foremost, selective control of *Poa annua* and *Poa trivialis*. Superintendents will finally be able to have bentgrass without any of the headaches of *Poa*. What does that mean? Better playability, improved aesthetics and reduced inputs.

Golfdom: You're doing lots of focus groups with superintendents. What feedback are you hearing?

Harriman: Primarily that Roundup Ready turf will be easier to maintain. You only have to take care of one species instead of two. It ends the age-old dilemma of, "I want bent, but I hate dealing with *Poa*." They also like the environmental benefits — like reduced pesticide and water usage — and they realize that glyphosate is ecologically friendly.

Golfdom: OK, but nothing's perfect and superintendents are always skeptical. What are they worried about?

Harriman: They're initially concerned about the broad use of Roundup and how they'll apply it. For example, they'll need to use different application equipment like injection rollers. They ask whether it will cross with crabgrass, but the two plants simply aren't biologically compatible — it's like trying to cross a cucumber and a tomato. Some have asked about yellowing or other damage to the bentgrass, but our testing shows that our variety is tolerant of even extraordinarily high rates of glyphosate.