

Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

Business briefs

2,4-D verdict: no risk when used appropriately

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concluded that the herbicide 2,4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D) does not present risks of concern to human health when users follow 2,4-D product instructions as outlined in EPA's 2,4-D Reregistration Eligibility Decision (RED) document.

The agency's announcement and release of the RED on 2,4-D completed a 17-year EPA review process. 2,4-D is a phenoxy herbicide discovered 60 years ago and is used worldwide for a variety of applications, including golf courses.

Over the course of 17 years, the Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data developed and submitted to EPA more than 300 Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) toxicology, environmental and residue studies that EPA scientists reviewed to assess the herbicide's safety under the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA).

Task Force members hold technical 2,4-D FIFRA registrations and include Dow AgroSciences, Nufarm Ltd., Agro-Gro and PBI/Gordon.

"The EPA's assessment of the human and environmental scientific data reinforces a growing number of regulatory decisions and expert reviews that conclude the use of 2,4-D according to product instructions does not present an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment," stated Don Page, assistant executive director of the Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data.

In 1947, 2,4-D was registered for use in the United States on crops and turfgrass. The EPA initiated an assessment for a toxicology review of 2,4-D in 1980, and reregis-

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Groups Wanted to Stay in New Orleans

BUT GCSAA, NGCOA HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO MOVE SHOW

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

The brass at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the National Golf

Course Owners Association (NGCOA) wanted to keep the February-scheduled Golf Industry Show (GIS) in New Orleans even after Hurricane Katrina had flooded and devastated most of the city. They wanted to keep the show there, says GCSAA CEO Steve Mona, for a good reason — to pump some money

into the ravaged city's economy. But when city leaders announced that all conventions through March had been canceled, Mona and NGCOA Executive Director Mike Hughes announced a few days later that the show would go on in Houston during its original dates, Feb. 9-11.

"We definitely wanted to support New Orleans," Mona said.

"Our first consideration was to host the event in New Orleans because we know the convention

industry will be vital to the city's recovery," Hughes added.

Mona says GCSAA's members felt the same way. Their collective message — mostly through e-mails sent to the organization — was to figure out a way to stay in New Orleans.

"In the last week or so we received more member feedback about any issue that I can recall in the almost 12 years I've been here," Mona said on Sept. 9.

Carey Spence, president of the Louisiana-Mississippi Golf Course Superintendents Association and superintendent of Ellendale Country Club in Houma, La., about 50 miles southwest of New Orleans, said in mid-September that it had been difficult to contact the chapter's

members because of damage to the region's communication structure.

"Communications around New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast are spotty at best and nonexistent for the most part," Spence said. "Those areas there are totally devastated. It's just a horrible situation."

Mona said the GCSAA has been in contact with some members who live and work in the Gulf coast area affected by the storm. He said about

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golf industry show

Full of Firsts

GRANT, REHR AND GIORDANO MAKE HISTORY AT ST. ANDREWS

By Anthony Pioppi, Contributing Editor

It was the 134th playing of the Open Championship and the 27th time that the Old Course in St. Andrews, Scotland, was hosting it. But this year's event in July, at least on the maintenance side, was also full of firsts.

Old Course Head Greenskeeper Euan Grant was on the job for his first Open and is believed to be the first non-St. Andrewsian to hold the title.

Lauren Giordano, who in 2003 interned at the Old Course and became the first woman ever to work on the crew there, was back, becoming the first woman ever to volunteer for an Open Championship. She has since earned a degree from Rutgers University.



Jay Rehr

And maybe most impressive was Jay Rehr, who undoubtedly became the first golf course turf technician to chalk up a career Grand Slam. Rehr spent 16 years turning wrenches at Augusta National, worked at the 1997 and 2002 U.S. Opens as well as the 2003 PGA before completing the slam at the most hallowed golf course in the world. He also has two U.S. Senior Opens, a U.S. Women's Open and a pair of Memorial Tournaments in his toolbox.

"Who wouldn't want to do a British Open?" the jocular Rehr asked rhetorically. Since 2004 he has been on his own as the sole employee of Turf Equip-

ment Consulting based in Grovertown, Ga., but it was his old boss at Augusta, Marsh Benson, that advised Rehr to complete the Slam at the Old Course.

"He told me, 'If you're going to do it, do it right,'" Rehr says.

What impressed Rehr most about the entire Old Course maintenance operation and what set it apart from all other major tournaments he's worked was the laid-back attitude. Starting with Grant on down to the guys who raked bunkers, tournament week was approached with a supreme air of confidence but without the manic pace and the world-could-end-at-any-moment attitude found in the maintenance facilities at many U.S. Majors.

Grant usually had a song on his lips when he made his first appearance at about 4 a.m. each day even though he was often working on less than three hours sleep. His boundless enthusiasm was at once amazing and frustrating to those in his presence. Grant's demeanor established the tone for the entire tournament. "You're not under pressure. You're not under the gun. It's not like everything has to be done immediately," Rehr said.

Instead of 18-hour days common for mechanics at U.S. Majors, the Old Course techs were broken down into two nine-hour shifts. Another difference in the work atmosphere that Rehr said was readily apparent was that the golf course and the tournament were the focal points, not the head greenskeeper. Grant had no desire to put his individual stamp on the event other than to have the Old Course in the best condition possible.

With course conditions the focus, the results were universally praised. Some players, including Greg Norman, said the Old Course was in the best condition they had ever seen.

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tration data development by the 2,4-D Task Force and review by EPA began in 1988.

Andersons restructures group

The Andersons has restructured its Processing Group and named Tom Waggoner president of the group. Waggoner had previously been vice president of sales and marketing for the group.

Arysta secures marketing rights

Arysta LifeScience North America announced it has secured exclusive domestic marketing rights for fluoxastrobin, a strobilurin fungicide in development for disease control alone and in combination products.

"We view this investment as a demonstration of our continuing commitment to supply highly effective plant disease control chemistry for turfgrass management and ornamental production," said Elin Miller, Arysta LifeScience North America president and CEO.

Fluoxastrobin is being tested extensively in university trials, according to the company.

Ex-ClubCorp head begins company

Former ClubCorp president Jim Hinckley has formed Century Golf Partners, a golf investment company created for the purpose of acquiring and managing country clubs and daily-fee golf courses throughout the country.

In addition, Century Golf Partners has created a golf investment partnership with Walton Street Capital, a private real estate investment company based in Chicago.

Hetrick leaves GCBAA

Lee Hetrick has left the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBAA) as its executive director after six years. Hetrick, based in Lincoln, Neb., announced his departure at the end of the association's summer meeting in New Jersey, adding that he wants to pursue other career goals. Hetrick will serve as a consultant to the GCBAA Executive Committee until the end of the year. Hetrick was instrumental in the growth and stability of the organization. GCBAA membership grew by 30 percent under his reign.