

Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

Business briefs

Arysta N.A. buys Micro Flo, a subsidiary of BASF

Arysta LifeScience North America Corp. acquired the major assets of Micro Flo Co. LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of BASF Corp.

The acquisition broadens the scope of Arysta LifeScience's North American sales operations and creates a strategic position in the U.S. crop protection segment.

"With this acquisition, Arysta LifeScience gains a solid range of products, a proven U.S. distribution network and a capable and experienced sales force with excellent customer relationships," said Dr. Christopher Richards, Arysta LifeScience president and CEO.

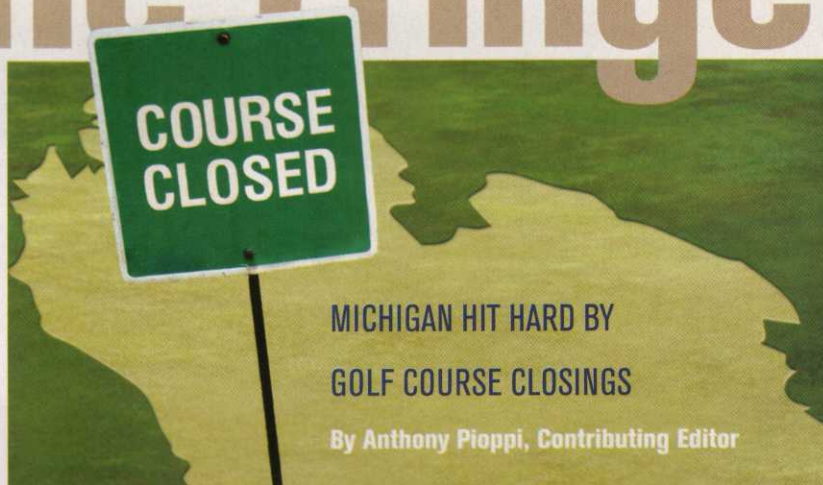
"Micro Flo is highly regarded for its portfolio of products and its customer service focus. Adding Micro Flo's operations to our existing presence in North America will give Arysta LifeScience a substantially stronger platform for future growth in the region."

Closing of the transaction is expected by the end of the first quarter this year, pending customary regulatory approvals. Both companies agreed not to disclose financial details of the transaction.

Micro Flo, with headquarters in Memphis, Tenn., and a formulation site in Sparks, Ga., is a manufacturer and distributor of off-patent crop protection chemicals and offers a variety of manufacturing and distribution services. This includes wholesale distributorships for fungicides, herbicides, insecticides and plant growth-regulating agents. Micro Flo has relationships with the major U.S.-based agricultural distribution networks.

Under the agreement, Arysta LifeScience will acquire the commercial business of Micro Flo, including a portfolio of active ingredients

Briefs continue on page 20



MICHIGAN HIT HARD BY GOLF COURSE CLOSINGS

By Anthony Pioppi, Contributing Editor

Ceasing Operation

Only a few years ago Michigan was the darling of golf course construction. How times have changed. This year the Wolverine state will see more golf courses bulldozed under than built. There were slightly more than 850 golf courses in Michigan at the beginning of 2006. There will be many less at the end of the year.

Michigan, like the Myrtle Beach area before it, is undergoing a market correction, which means golf course closings. While some are being eradicated and others are on death's door, only one course will be built in 2006.

Golf course openings are down across the country. The National Golf Foundation said 124.5 courses (in 18-hole equivalents) opened in 2005 compared with 150.5 in 2004. In the record year of 2000, 398.5 courses opened.

Jerry Matthews is by far the most prolific architect in Michigan's history, having his hand in more than 100 designs, including some with his father Bruce Matthews, with whom he began designing in 1959. He said he foresaw the golf boom ending in his home state but not like this.

"I felt it would slow down. It ended abruptly," the 72-year-old Matthews said.

Included in the growing list of courses that no longer exist is the Wolverine Golf Course, the first layout Matthews designed with his father. He said he was stunned and saddened when he drove up expecting to see golf holes and instead found homes.

"You have a lot of memories tied up in what you do," Matthews said.

He and partner Gary Chapman have no new courses on the drawing board, although they are in talks that could lead to designs. Their work is coming from renovations.

Matthews said he and Chapman have come up with six reasons for the dire conditions of the golf market:

- The state, especially in the southeast region, is overbuilt.
- The economy is down, more than that of other

Continued on page 18

Business briefs

Briefs continued from page 14

and registrations, the Micro Flo trademark, patents and the development laboratory located in Sparks.

Pair of veteran employees take reins at Floratine

Brian Goodwin and Peter Stromberg, a pair of veteran employees of the Floratine Products Group, are the new co-owners of the company. In addition, Goodwin was named CEO while Stromberg was named executive vice president, with international responsibilities.

Floratine co-founders Bill Byrnes and Travis Jones will continue to serve in senior executive roles.

"Both Peter and I are anxious to continue building on positive company growth and increasing brand awareness," Goodwin said. "As long-term employees and now as owners, we have a vested interest in the company, including its mission, employees, and products and services. Our goal is to improve upon what is already in place."

"It is a very exciting time at Floratine," Byrnes added. "Not only do we have new very capable, highly regarded individuals leading the company, but our reputation for providing technical competence and assistance is gaining increased awareness and respect within the golf maintenance industry."

Combs no longer just on the 'interim' at Torrey Pines

Candice Combs could be the first female superintendent to host a U.S. Open after she and assistant Bill Sinclair were permanently hired by the City of San Diego to tend the courses at Torrey Pines.

The South Course at Torrey Pines is slated to host the 2008 Open.

According to the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, City Manager Mark Woodward praised Combs and Sinclair for their preparation for the Buick Invitational and noted their positive agronomic reviews in the tournament's wake. Woodward had moved the pair from Balboa Park in July for a tryout.

New Bayer Boss Takes Humble Approach

CLEVELAND: I DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

Neil Cleveland is the new chief in charge of the U.S. Green Business for Bayer Environmental Science, but he'll be the first to tell you he doesn't know everything.

"I'm smart enough to know that I'm stupid about some things," said Cleveland, whose first day at his new post was April 3.

But Cleveland stressed that he's not concerned that he doesn't know it all because he has a solid support staff, including several former superintendents. "We can take advantage of the total brain power we have available and do some good things for the industry."

Cleveland returns home to the United States, specifically Raleigh, N.C., from France to assume his post. For the last two years, Cleveland had been Bayer's global portfolio manager of Green Business at the company's global headquarters in Lyon, France.

"It's been a wonderful experience," said Cleveland, who was promoted to his previous title from regional sales manager of Bayer's U.S. Lawn Care & Landscape in Kansas

City, Mo. Why did Bayer's top brass pick Cleveland to succeed Dan Carrothers, who resigned at the end of 2005?

"That's a fair question," said Cleveland, who has held various titles with Bayer since 1993. Cleveland said he "grew up" on the golf course side of the business as a senior sales representative from 1993 through 1996.

"We can take advantage of the total brain power we have available and do some good things for the industry."

"I think I bring a good understanding of the day-to-day things that an assistant superintendent and a golf course superintendent must go through," he said.

One thing is for certain, Cleveland says, and that is he will not take Bayer's business for granted.

"One of the things we need to make sure we do is remain humble," Cleveland said. "We need to earn this business on a day-in-and-day-out basis."

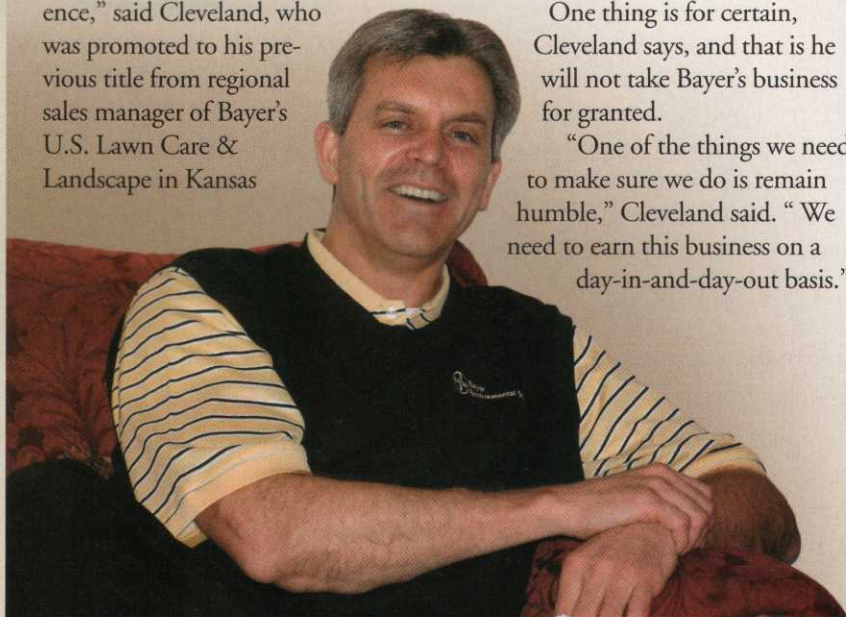


PHOTO BY: DEBBIE CLAYTON