

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### No Special Review for 2,4-D

The Environmental Protection Agency recently announced its decision to not initiate a special review for 2,4 dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D). "Based on extensive scientific review of many epidemiology and animal studies, the agency finds that the weight of the evidence does not support a conclusion that 2,4-D, is a likely human carcinogen," the EPA stated in an Aug. 9 news release. "The agency has determined that the existing data do not support a conclusion that links human cancer to 2,4-D exposure."

The EPA first considered a special review for the widely used herbicide in 1986.

### Ravel "Coming Home" to Syngenta

Dave Ravel is returning to Syngenta Professional Products in Greensboro, N.C., as its market manager for golf after spending four years as head of sales for consumer products with Bayer Environmental Science. Before that, he had been with Syngenta and legacy company Novartis from 1997 to 2003.

"Returning to Syngenta is like coming home," said Ravel, who graduated from Slippery Rock University with a degree in environmental education and earned a master's degree in business from Frederick Taylor University. "I've kept a close eye on the company as a competitor for the last four years. Syngenta has significantly grown its offering of products and services to the golf market"

Ravel replaces Joe DiPaola, who will lead a new initiative within Syngenta's ornamental business units. DiPaola was Syngenta's golf market manager for six years.

"Ravel brings a wealth of experience and leadership to the market, with a track record of

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## He's the Real Deal

ED BEGLEY JR., THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT TORO'S WATERSMART EVENT, IS A TRUE ENVIRONMENTALIST

By David Frabotta, Senior Editor

**A**ctor Ed Begley Jr. is a pretty cool guy. He's the furthest thing from a Hollywood snob you'll ever meet. In fact, he's probably the target of such snobbery when he arrives to tinsel-town events on his bicycle or in his electric car.

Oh sure, other Hollywood types will have a Prius for the political statement so media crews can get a glimpse of them saving energy when they pull up to their private jets.

But Begley — who was the keynote speaker at the second-annual Toro WaterSmart Symposium held in July at the company's irrigation headquarters in Riverside, Calif. — is the real deal. And he doesn't just ride his bike around town. He rides one to generate electricity at his house, too. That's right, after 10 minutes of furious peddling on his stationary bike, Begley generates enough electricity to make two pieces of toast. How many would be willing



Ed Begley rides his bike for 10 minutes to brown his toast. He also cooks his dinner in a solar oven.

to make that kind of time investment into such a small part of their days?

The rest of the house's electricity is generated by solar panels, and the Studio City neighborhood home also features a white picket fence made from recycled plastic, recycled rainwater for his drought-tolerant landscape, and energy-efficient appliances including a solar oven.

Begley has been showing the world how people can live greener, too. His reality show, "Living with Ed," premiered earlier this year, and season two began Aug. 27 on HGTV. But don't expect a militant preacher on a soapbox. He and his wife, Rachele Carson, continually negotiate lifestyle decisions and debate their environmental impact (she is very conscientious, but isn't quite on the same level as Ed. Who could be?).

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# Here Comes Penoxsulam

DOW AGROSCIENCES INTRODUCES NEW ACTIVE INGREDIENT FOR SPECIALTY HERBICIDE **By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief**

**C**lad in his white lab coat and protective glasses, Dow AgroSciences scientist David Simpson stood in front of the trade press and spoke about the challenges his company endures in bringing a new chemistry to market.

"A lot of times things work well in the greenhouse, but we can't put them out in the real world," said Simpson, the company's product characterization leader in global weed management. "And by the time we discover something, it usually takes about seven to nine years to launch it."

It's a taxing process, indeed, but can be worth it. On a recent July day, Simpson and other Dow AgroSciences leaders invited the trade press to their corporate office in Indianapolis to talk about the reward that comes with the research: A new active ingredient.

At the press event, Dow AgroSciences announced the registration of penoxsulam, a proprietary molecule that delivers postemergence control of broadleaf weeds in turf at low-use rates.



**Mark Urbanowski**

How low? Penoxsulam, a systematic herbicide, provides activity at generally 0.02 to 0.06 pounds of active ingredient per acre. It was accepted for review and registration under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Reduced Risk Pesticide Initiative.

"You must have excellent turfgrass safety for a product to survive in this market," said Jeff Borger, an instructor of turfgrass weed management at Michi-

gan State University, who researched the herbicide. "Penoxsulam has this."

Dow AgroSciences will market penoxsulam under the name LockUp specialty herbicide, and expects to introduce the product in mid-2008. It will be available to distributors as a formulated product alone and in combination with other selective herbicides on fertilizers or straight granules. Mark Urbanowski, the company's senior marketing specialist for turf and ornamental and technical products, said penoxsulam can be mixed with 2,4-D and Dicamba to broaden the spectrum of control.

"This active brings powerful, consistent control with residual activity and will be a good option to the old industry standbys found in favorite three-ways," Urbanowski said.

Penoxsulam is labeled for use on most cool- and warm-season turf. Superintendents can use it on fairways and roughs. Dow AgroSciences said penoxsulam is the first ALS inhibitor formulated on a granule. This mode of action inhibits plant enzyme acetolactate, which is essential for the synthesis of amino acids. Inhibition of amino acid production inhibits cell division and causes death in susceptible plants.

Dow AgroSciences also said university trial research revealed that penoxsulam showed activity on susceptible species when applied to wet and dry foliage. It also showed enhanced efficacy on white clover, Virginia buttonweed, dandelion and dollar weed when combined with phenoxy herbicides.

Penoxsulam also controls sedge weeds, ground ivy, chickweed, oxalis, bittercress, pigweed, kyllinga, sagebrush, Florida betony and broadleaf plantain.

Dow AgroSciences also developed a

## Quotable

**"It was human error."**

— *Golf Course Specialist Inc. spokesman Michael Williams commenting after his contracting company fried all 36 putting greens at Hains Point golf course in Washington. Groundskeepers mistook a herbicide for fertilizer. (Examiner.com)*

**"Golf has been great for my marriage."**

— *Phil Trailies, president and CEO of Club Car Inc., who doesn't leave his wife at home when he takes to the golf course to play 18.*

**"I have done this since '68 and I've never experienced anything like this."**

— *Stockholm, Sweden, police detective Christer Holmlund after pulling over actor/comedian Bill Murray, who was driving a golf car in city traffic and smelled of alcohol.*

liquid formulation of penoxsulam called Sapphire speciality herbicide for use as a stand-alone product for problem weeds such as English lawn daisy found on golf courses in California and the Pacific Northwest. It will also be introduced in mid-2008.

During the meeting with the press, Dow AgroSciences staff members stressed how basic manufacturers spend millions of dollars investing in new technology. David Morris, the company's commercial leader for turf and ornamental and technical products, emphasized the "investment element" and

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## Off The Fringe

# A Day on the Hill

### GREEN INDUSTRY PLEADS ITS CAUSE TO LEGISLATORS REGARDING H-2B ISSUE

By Daniel G. Jacobs

**T**here's reason for hope. Green Industry executives from around the country descended on Washington D.C. in July to let their legislators know how they feel about a trio of key issues — H-2B visa cap extension, water and association health care. Some met with the congressmen directly while others expressed their viewpoint to aides.

The 21-member Ohio delegation met with aides for senators George Voinovich (R) and Sherrod Brown (D). Voinovich supports the H-2B visa cap extension while Brown opposes it. The delegation wanted to express its gratitude to the senior senator and do what it could to convince his colleague across the aisle to change his thinking.

How important is the issue? Steve Pattie, president of The Pattie Group, says that he had 30 workers delayed for two weeks because of the backlog of applications at the U.S. consulate and lost \$200,000 in business. Losing the extension (allowing H-2B workers from the previous three seasons not to be counted against the cap of 66,000 H-2B visas) would hurt not only his businesses but many others. Wayne Impullitti of Novelty, Ohio-based Impullitti Landscaping lost \$100,000 in business for a similar reason: He did not have access to workers.

The group met with Sherrod Brown aide David Hodapp who initially conveyed the senator's belief that there are Americans willing to take the available



jobs based primarily on the senator's office getting more than 1,000 letters a month decrying the lack of jobs in Ohio.

Only slightly tongue in cheek, Phil Fogarty of Weed Man said, "Send their resumes to us."

The delegation explained that many young Americans don't like the seasonal work but are seeking year-round jobs. Also, the hard physical labor dissuades many from applying.

Despite the initial skepticism from the aide, there may be reason for hope from Brown's office. It was learned that Brown's office would review the Save Our Small and Seasonal Business Act of 2007. He requested information on how the 66,000 visas are distributed. He was specifically looking for ideas on how to improve the system so Ohio businesses get a greater share of the seasonal guest workers.

On the other side of the aisle, the delegation also met with Doug Dziak, counsel with Voinovich's office. Voinovich has been a friend to the cause and is an original co-sponsor of Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski's bill to extend the returning worker provision of the H-2B. That provision is scheduled to sunset Sept. 30.

Mikulski's bill extends the three-year returning worker provision, which does not count those workers against the 66,000 visa cap. Without a change, many Green Industry entities, including golf courses, might have difficulty finding workers. ■

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the company's continued research investment for new molecules, new formulations, and innovative active ingredient combinations. Urbanowski said generic products are driving the value down in the pesticide segment, adding that it's getting more costly to develop new active ingredients.

"Many of our industry's products have come out of our agricultural business," he said. "As that business tends to go more into the biotechnology arena, there may not be as many active ingredients coming out of that pipeline. The cost to develop a new active, because there are less of them, will escalate."

The Dow AgroSciences staff also discussed the company's new EcoZome technology, which was introduced in February. EcoZome is a formulation system that consists of very small droplets — about 150 nanometers to 200 nanometers — of active ingredient dispersed in water and stabilized by a lamellar liquid crystal coating. Dow AgroSciences has filed for a patent covering the technology for use with pesticides.

According to Dow AgroSciences, some attributes of EcoZome are:

- alternative water-based formulations that reduce the use of aromatic solvents and thereby minimize volatile organic compounds (VOC);
- reduced odor versus EC/EW (emulsion concentrate/emulsions in water) formulations.

EcoZome allows Dow AgroSciences to improve existing active ingredients after they come off patent. Urbanowski said Dow AgroSciences has already talked with competitive basic manufacturers about licensing them the EcoZome technology for their own products.

Was EcoZome developed to combat generic manufacturers? "I wouldn't say it was developed for that, but I think ... it fits very well with that," Urbanowski said. "We're constantly looking to improve what we have for multiple reasons." ■



## All for One and One for All

By Allen James

*Editor's note: James, president of RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), is writing a bimonthly column for Golfdom. RISE is the national trade association representing manufacturers, formulators, distributors and other industry leaders involved with specialty pesticide and fertilizer products. James' column focuses on legislative and regulatory issues in the industry.*



Allen James

**T**his summer's intense heat here in Washington D.C. had me watching more than my share of golf tournaments. While I enjoy watching Tiger

Woods and the rest of the field, I must admit my thoughts often turned elsewhere while watching the professionals make their way around the back nine.

What struck me most was while golf is a solitary sport, it is not a solitary activity. Certainly, it's Tiger's job to score low, but he didn't get there alone. In addition to his caddy and business advisors, he's counting on the club's superintendent and his crew, who in turn are counting on their distributor suppliers, who in turn are counting on product formulators and manufacturers. It is not news to anyone reading *Golfdom* that tournament-ready courses don't just happen with a little watering and mowing.

What is the point of all of this summer reminiscing? That no one in any segment of the green industry is going it alone — at least not successfully. Our industry truly relies on the professional contributions of many to prepare a golf course for a tournament or for average weekend golfers. You understand the importance of a good crew and responsive sales reps as well as the leadership

qualities necessary to be a good superintendent. These same qualities are also necessary to ensure you continue to have the legal right to choose the pesticide and fertilizer products you need, when and where you need them.

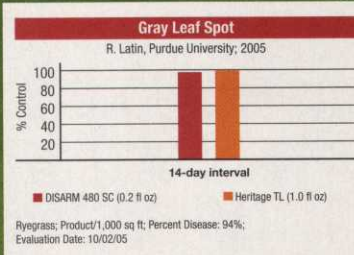
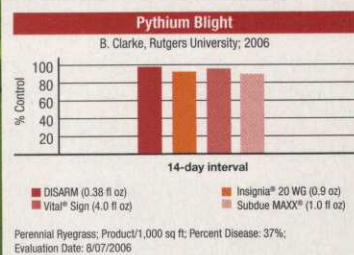
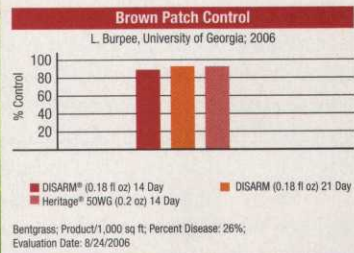
Lawn and landscape professionals and homeowners have been the target of local product bans and restrictions with one or two exceptions. One municipality now has an ordinance requiring a town permit for any pesticide application, while other jurisdictions have banned phosphorus and nitrogen-containing fertilizers altogether. Couple these policies with pressures already on golf courses with respect to land use and water issues and you have a good idea of where counties and towns are going. While local product choice policies impacting golf are few at this time, there is no reason for complacency or to let other green industry segments go it alone. Anti-green activists are never satisfied, so this year's lawn care ordinances become next year's golf course restrictions.

We'll need every green industry member monitoring local action and ready to bring common sense to local debates. Here at RISE we continue to expand our grassroots network, which includes support from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and individual superintendents. We can't succeed alone, especially given the number of local challenges and renewed anti-pesticide activity at the federal level. Grassroots is not a solitary activity, so I urge you to consider your role in helping to promote and defend every segment's right to choose pesticides and fertilizers as part of their plant health and pest management programs. Let GCSAA know of local challenges to product choice or contact our grassroots manager Elizabeth Grotos at [egrotos@pestfacts.org](mailto:egrotos@pestfacts.org) or 202-872-3869 and 202-361-6022 (cell). ■

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success," said Steve Spain, head of Syngenta Commercial Lawn and Garden. "His knowledge of Syngenta and his unique perspective will be invaluable for us moving forward."

At Syngenta, he served as a field sales representative for the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions, regional sales manager for the Midwest, and program manager. With Bayer Environmental Science, he served as regional golf sales manager for the Southeast.

### **BASF Joins FarmLinks**

BASF Turf and Ornamentals became a cornerstone partner with FarmLinks, a research and demonstration golf course in Sylacauga, Ala. BASF joins The Toro Co. and Agrium Advanced Technologies as cornerstone partners for the 18-hole, championship facility.

About 1,200 superintendents visit the facility each year for product training and information on how to manage turf problems. BASF plans to invite about 400 turf professionals to FarmLinks each year to learn more about its products. "The Experience at FarmLinks will help BASF reach our customers and end users through a variety of avenues, including product launch training, product demonstration, focus groups and relationship building with end users and distributors," says Toni Bucci, Ph.D., business manager for BASF Turf and Ornamentals.

Exact terms of the marketing partnership were not disclosed, but BASF will pay FarmLinks to use its products on the golf course, and BASF will have first right of refusal on future initiatives at FarmLinks in the areas of horticulture, aquatics, lawn care, forestry and integrated vegetation management.

The partnership arises as former cornerstone partner Syngenta Professional Products and FarmLinks "came to an amicable end in the middle of 2006," says Erle Fairly, president of FarmLinks. "In the normal course of business, programs and projects come to a close as strategies evolve, and we're continually re-evaluating them."

FarmLinks also recently added Aquatrols to its partner list. Other FarmLinks partners include Club Car, Tycrop Turf, DryJect, Profile Products and The Soil Reliever.

## Taking Care of a Precious Resource

RAIN BIRD'S JOHNSON TALKS ABOUT WATERING WISELY

**M**ore than 2.7 billion people will face severe water shortages by the year 2025 if the world continues consuming water at the same rate. That's not some extreme environmental group talking. It's the United Nations.

Other reports — from similar-minded groups — state that nations will one day wage war over water. And this could happen soon, not in the next 500 years.

*Golfdom* Editor in Chief Larry Aylward recently spent time with Dave Johnson, Rain Bird's director of corporate marketing, and asked him questions about the water crisis and the golf industry's role in watering wisely.

### **Is the fresh water crisis as serious as some people say or are these just doomsayers predicting this resource's demise?**

I think you've got things at both ends of the spectrum. Certainly, there are people out there who are overreacting. But the truth of the matter is there's a crisis and maybe sometimes you need a little overreaction to move the needle one way or another. You look out at different parts of the country like the South, Southwest and West and some of the reservoirs like Lake Powell and Lake Meade are at record lows. The truth of the matter is there isn't as much fresh water out there.

### **Are people, including superintendents, taking the crisis seriously?**

I think it helps all of us for everyone to think about the water issues and think



about ways we can use less, and that certainly includes superintendents.

### **Several areas of the country experienced drought this summer. What did superintendents do to combat this drought?**

You'll get all sorts of answers to that question, from some who didn't do anything to some who took it very serious. But every superintendent out there can benefit from what some who were more affected by drought were doing. They measured their water use. They looked at their irrigation systems and looked at their distribution uniformity. Some golf courses increased the number of sprinkler heads they put out on the turf because that actually leads to increased precision of their watering. Some golf courses also looked to technology — smart pump systems and smart weather control systems and things like that. In terms of turf care, some courses went as far as to stop watering the rough area and letting it go natural. We've also seen more courses using reclaimed water than before, sometimes by legislation and other times by choice. Also, golf courses are paying more attention to spaces that do not need irrigation, maybe having more native materials or areas of desert landscape with drip irrigation. I've even seen some places where cities are paying golf courses to take out areas of turf and replace them with something else.

### **What are irrigation manufacturers doing technology-wise to save water?**

There's a lot of new technology out

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## Off The Fringe



"Every single thing I've done that's been good for the environment has been good for my pocketbook," Ed Begley told attendees.

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So the show is a great microcosm of idealism versus practicality and the pampered lives we've come to expect.

And there is no doubt: It's not just for show. Begley wholeheartedly believes in the life he lives and he treasures his responsibility of treading lightly on the environment.

"There's no time to go door-to-door with all these issues, that's why I'm doing the show," Begley told an audience of 250 golf course superintendents, landscape irrigators and water district authorities at the conference, which was held in conjunction with the Irrigation Association's Smart Irrigation Month campaign.

"Every single thing I've done that's been good for the environment has been good for my pocketbook," Begley says.

Begley acknowledged that superintendents are good stewards of water

and irrigate wisely to reduce costs. He said the biggest opportunity to save water lies with homeowners.

But many golf courses can improve. Golf courses can save about 15 percent to 25 percent of the water they use with a weather-based system, says Erik Christiansen, a former superintendent turned irrigation contractor. He founded EC Design Group to help golf courses identify the most efficient and effective irrigation techniques for individual properties. Wind exposure, solar radiation, slope, shape, soil content and soil depth all influence how a space should be irrigated. Similar microclimates then can be linked into a single zone for irrigation needs.

Toro's WaterSmart Symposium moves to Las Vegas next year. The Irrigation Association Show takes place in San Diego Dec. 9-11. ■

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there from simple things like rotors that are wind tolerant so your water goes where you want it to go and not as much evaporates to smart pump technology that adapts to weather conditions coupled with smart controller technology that is evapotranspiration (ET)-based, where it measures the precise amount of water being used by the environment and replaces just that amount of water. Golf courses are bringing in advanced weather stations to help measure that ET data.

### **Where will the green industry stand in 10 to 20 years in regard to fresh-water use?**

I don't know if I can speak for an entire industry, but I can tell you what I'm observing. Almost without exception, people are taking more responsibility for it and looking for ways to solve the problem and be part of the solution. I think you'll see the golf industry in general figuring out ways where we can still enjoy a round of golf on a Sunday morning on beautiful green turf but still use water intelligently and not waste it.

*To listen to a podcast of a similar interview with Johnson, visit [www.golfdom.com/onlineexclusive](http://www.golfdom.com/onlineexclusive).*

## Golfdom's Blog of the Month



To me, most vanity license plates are just about the silliest and most self-absorbed thing you can waste your

money on. Oh sure, there are some clever and cute ones. A newlywed friend of my little brother has one that says TEACH4U (Mitsubishi Eclipse). She's yet to find a job, but her exuberance is adorable.

Then there's the minivan that says BILLPAYR. Ironically, they now have one extra bill to pay with the personalized plate. HAVEFUN or SUNGODSS on a convert-

ible makes me smile (and my wife jealous). My favorite one donned STOP EPA on a rebuilt 1978 F-150 in response to Ohio's mandatory emissions check (he had to write his congressman and present the letter to the BMV for that one.)

But it really annoys me when a vanity plate redundantly brags about the car.

MYPRSCHE from the movie "Office Space" epitomizes this redundancy quite well. If you drive a car, we already know the model and probably that it's yours (even if your daddy bought it for you).

LEXUS and S CLASS (Mercedes) are some of the least original. And it's hard to

go a day without seeing PONYGT or MSTNG on a ... well, you know what. Why don't you ever see FOCUS or TAURUS on a Ford? (Side note: What genius named the Aspire? Does it aspire to be a better car?)

So now it's your turn to let me have it. How many out there have TRFGURU, GRNSPEED or TURFGUY? What are the coolest or lamest vanity plates that you see around town? I bet each state has a HOT2TROT and an ALLTHAT with a bag of chips magnet on the bumper.

*E-mail your thoughts to David Frabotta at [dfrabotta@questex.com](mailto:dfrabotta@questex.com).*