Business briefs

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Lee appointed CEO of Sipcam Agro and ADVAN

The board of directors of agrochemical companies Sipcam Agro USA and ADVAN LLC appointed Andy D. Lee as CEO of the two companies. Lee has extensive experience within the agrochemical industry, having held senior leadership roles with BASF Corp. and other chemical companies in the United States and Europe.

Prior to his appointment as CEO of Sipcam and ADVAN, Lee was director of the U.S. Crop Protection Business for BASF Corp. Earlier in his career, Lee held positions in global marketing for BASF and for American Home Products. Lee also worked in Brussels, Belgium, with American Cyanamid where he served as technical director and then commercial director for Europe.

Lebanon joins Project Evergreen

Lebanon Turf announced it's supporting Project Evergreen, a national non-profit organization representing green industry service providers, associations, suppliers/distributors, media companies and other organizations. Project EverGreen's mission is to raise the awareness of the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of landscapes and to promote the significance of those who preserve and enhance green spaces at home, work and play.

"Project Evergreen is an organization every member of the green industry should stand behind," said Mike Sisti, marketing manager at Lebanon Turf.

Duich honored with Funk Award

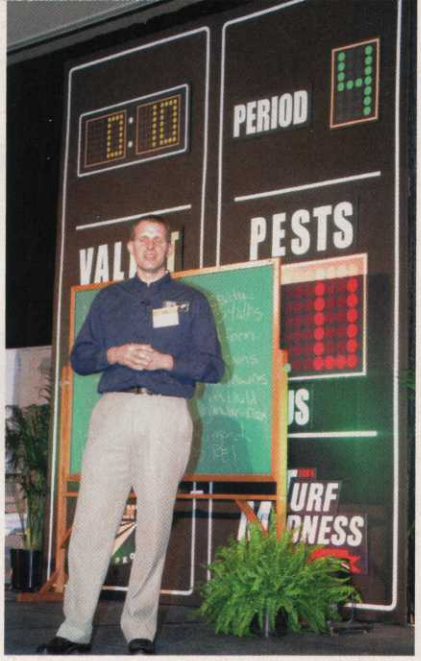
Longtime Penn State University professor Joe Duich earned the Turfgrass Breeders Association's C. Reed Funk award, which honors individuals for their dedication to turfgrass breeding and their impact on education. Duich spent almost 40 years at Penn State University.

"Dr. Joe has dedicated his entire life to improving the state of the turfgrass industry," said Crystal Fricker, board member of the Turfgrass Breeders Association. ■

Nice Shot

SHETLAR, MARTIN SCORE BIG IN VALENT BASKETBALL-THEMED TURF MADNESS CONFERENCE

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief



Valent's Jason Fausey makes a point during a presentation he gave at Turf Madness.

While his company's conference embraced a basketball theme, Trevor Thorley, president of Valent U.S.A., didn't slam-dunk on anybody. But you could say Thorley was one of the go-to guys for any questions at the recent conference, dubbed Turf Madness, which the pesticide manufacturer and marketer hosted in Las Vegas for superintendents, its distributors and others.

The Valent folks used the famed NCAA basketball tournament, known as March Madness, as the backdrop for their turf science event, which focused on turf pesticide practices, among other things. The speaker stage at the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino was decorated like a locker-room and included a scoreboard that read: Valent 99, Pests 0.

Dave Shetlar, associate professor of entomology at The Ohio State University, was one of the star speakers of the conference. In his talk, Shetlar noted the increased safeness of some of the new insecticides on the market.

"If you would have told me 15 years ago that we would have a whole new slate of insecticides that would be less toxic, I would have said you're crazy," Shetlar said. "But here we are."

Shetlar pointed out the turf industry has divested itself of most of the organophosphates because of the Environmental Protection Agency's actions to phase out the products. Shetlar also mentioned that the EPA is currently reviewing pyrethroids.

"The EPA has already sent out notes that say the risk cup on pyrethroids is already overflowing," Shetlar said. "That's beltway speak for we think we're going to have to ban or restrict a lot of these pyrethroids."

Shetlar specifically cited the neonicitinoids family of insecticides, including Valent's Arena insecticide, when speaking about the safer insecticides. Arena's active ingredient is clothianidin, which is a category four in EPA's toxicity rating.

"The terminology for category four is practically nontoxic," Shetlar added.

But Shetlar stated that surfactants added to some formulated products have made them more toxic despite their near non-toxic active ingredients.

"When's the last time an insecticide was made more toxic by adding these inerts to it?" Shetlar asked. "But the bottom line is the active ingredient in that formulation is practically nontoxic."

The problem with the neonicitinoids — and it's not really a problem — is that when end-users use a pesticide from that family, "they want to spray that bug and they want to have that bug hit the ground screaming."

Organophosphate and carbamate pesticides had that effect on bugs, but the neonicitinoids don't because they don't impact a bug's receiving nerve,

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Off The Fringe

Water Hazard

There wasn't much to chirp about on the first day of spring in parts of the Midwest and South, where severe flooding occurred. The Wilkshire Golf Course in Bolivar, Ohio, wasn't spared and was turned into a river ... or a lake, depending on how you look at this photograph.

PHOTO COURTESY: ED RICHESSON

"Nice Shot" — *Continued from page 18*

Shetlar pointed out. After a bug is sprayed with a neonicitinoid pesticide, it's fully aware of what's going on, but it doesn't react to what's going on.

"It's in la-la land," Shetlar says. "The neonicitinoids are mood-altering drugs for bugs."

Because the bugs are rendered useless, they don't feel like eating. "And if they don't feed within hours, they will die," Shetlar said.

Bruce Martin, the professor of plant pathology and physiology from Clemson University, was another star speaker at the Valent event. Martin spoke about fungicide practices. He reminded those in attendance that dollar spot is the No. 1 turf disease.

"It's persistent and can spread easily," Martin said of dollar spot. "And if there's any one disease where we've had serious problems with fungicide resistance, it's dollar spot."

Martin also said dollar spot — caused by the fungus *Sclerotinia homeocarpa* — has developed into more of a challenge to control in recent years. That might have something to do with global warming, he added.

"I reviewed a paper recently that showed evidence that climate change — it's a little warmer and more humid in certain areas — is making it more conducive for dollar spot," Martin said.

But the major cause of dollar spot on golf course greens is cultural practices. You guessed it — low mowing heights, low nitrogen levels and anything else to keep the golf ball rolling fast and smooth.

What to do? Raise the cutting heights and increase the nitrogen for starters, Martin says. And explain to golfers that you're doing this to offset dollar spot, which could make their beloved greens more awful to putt on than they realize. Of course, removing dew and a sound fungicide program can also help. ■