

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### Lebanon Acquires Emerald Isle

Lebanon Seaboard Corp. acquired the Emerald Isle line of premium foliar and other granular fertilizer products from Milliken Chemical, a division of Milliken & Co. Terms of the agreement between the two privately held companies were not announced. Emerald Isle True Foliar products provide seaplant extract and other beneficial supplements for root growth, stress tolerance and disease resistance.

### Bonar Wins Green Section Award

The United States Golf Association named Terry Bonar, golf course superintendent at Canterbury Golf Club in Shaker Heights, Ohio, as the recipient of the 2009 USGA Green Section Award, which is presented annually by the USGA to recognize individuals who exemplify outstanding contributions and dedication to the game through their work with turfgrass. Bonar is a member of Golfdom's Editorial Advisory Staff.

"To be considered in their company, I'm very humbled by this gesture," said Bonar, who has more than 45 years of experience in golf course maintenance.

### IA Unveils New Look

The Irrigation Association recently unveiled a new logo and tagline. The redesigned brand, revealed during the 2008 Irrigation Show, is part of IA's strategic plan to become the recognized authority on irrigation.

The association says its new logo communicates the critical link between irrigation and making things grow, while the tagline, "Smart practices. Sustainable solutions," is a powerful message of IA's mission and its members' commitment to better water management.



## Future Leaders Gather at Disney to Learn

By David Frabotta

**G**rowing the game isn't a mantra; it's an ongoing commitment. That's why The First Tee partners with Walt Disney World and The Toro Co. to educate high school students about not only the game of golf, but careers in golf and hospitality as well.

The second-annual Future Leaders Forum, which took place in early November at Walt Disney in Orlando, welcomed 50 First Tee leaders from chapters around the world.

The delegates earned the trip through their exemplary participation through The First Tee, as well as essays to be part of the program. The winners won a cool, behind-the-scenes look at a PGA Tour event: The Children's Miracle Network Classic at Disney.

**ABOVE: Gary Myers, director of golf courses and grounds for Walt Disney Resorts, speaks to the Future Leaders delegates. "It's important for students to know they have career options outside of playing golf."**

Dennis Himan, group vice president of golf and landscape for Toro, read each survey, and said these students are some of the sharpest teenagers he has ever met, largely due to etiquette and life lessons learned from The First Tee. "The core of our company is built around golf," he says. "So it behooves us to participate in programs like this because there is a possibility that these kids, some of the best and brightest the sport has to offer, will come to work in the industry."

Part of the tour involved a stop with Gary Myers, director of golf courses and grounds for Walt Disney Resorts, which has 81 golf holes. He said it's imperative for superintendents to highlight golf maintenance opportunities in their respective regions. That includes speaking to student groups, technical colleges and horticulture classes.

"It's important for superintendents to talk about job opportunities, especially as we're headed into economic times like these (when there are a lot of job seekers and pressure to operate a more efficient business)." ■

## Off The Fringe

# Expanding Their Horizons

STATE GRANT WILL ENABLE ANDERSONS TO PURSUE NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR TURFGRASS AND AGRICULTURE

By Larry Aylward, Editor-In-Chief

Chuck Anderson felt like he was back in college cramming all night for a final exam. Only this time, Anderson and some of his colleagues from The Andersons, the Maumee, Ohio-based agribusiness company, were cramming to ready a proposal for a chance to receive \$5 million in grants from the state of Ohio.

“Actually, it was like cramming four years of college into six weeks,” says Anderson, the company’s director of technical services and marketing development, adding that it took a team of 12 people working intently for a month and a half to complete the proposal. “The night before it was due, some people worked all night to finish it.”

All the hard work paid off. Last summer, The Andersons announced that a collaborative team it led will receive \$5 million in grants from the Ohio Third Frontier Commission, a state project whose goal is to expand Ohio’s high-tech research capabilities and promote innovation and company formation. The Andersons said it received the grants for the development and commercialization of advanced granules and other emerging technologies to provide solutions for the economic health and environmental concerns of the green industry and the agriculture industry.

The Andersons granular technology includes Contec DG in the golf industry, which is marketed by the company’s turf and specialty group, Andersons Golf Products. The grant enables The Andersons to accelerate its research in



extending this proprietary technology to agriculture applications, according to Tom Waggoner, president of The Andersons Turf & Specialty Group.

Waggoner is excited the company received the grant because it means the state believes The Andersons can create products that can have a positive impact.

“We look at our business as a quality-of-life industry,” Waggoner said. “How much better does it get than to help make the world green? How much better does it get than having a hand in creating an environment for kids and adults who can go outside and feel good about what they’re in?”

Waggoner said the world’s current emphasis on environmental sustainability plays into the green industry’s hands. Turfgrass has plenty to do with quality of life when you consider recreational activities such as golf, he added.

Other members of the collaborative team are: The Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC), the nation’s largest ag-biosciences center; Syngenta Crop Protection; PSB Co., an Ohio-based manufacturer of granule applicators; National Lime and Stone Co., an Ohio-based limestone supplier and granulator of advanced soil-dispersing granules; and Ohio Bio-products Innovation Center (OBIC), a state group that fosters industry and academic collaboration.

In December of 2007, the last thing on Chuck Anderson’s and Tom Waggoner’s minds was to apply for grant money. They were in the middle of the biggest professional turf product launch in the company’s history, Contec DG.

“The last thing we wanted to do was more research when we were just launching [the dispersible granule] technology that took us years to

Jesse Walle, Tom Waggoner, Chuck Anderson and Mike Bandy have \$5 million more to work with for R&D, thanks to a state grant.

get to market,” Anderson said.

But Tim Birthisel, technical manager of the turf and specialty group, found out about possible state funding through the OBIC, which committed to help The Andersons. Chuck Anderson said the OBIC “pushed us to think bigger.”

The company heard it only had about a 10 percent chance of getting funding, but Waggoner, Anderson, Birthisel and others liked their chances.

Anderson said it was evident the opportunity was bigger than to benefit just the turfgrass industry. “There was a greater cause,” he said.

Last winter, the company decided to draw up a proposal to apply for the grant. The proposal had to do with using technology to improve environmental and efficacy of delivering fertilizers and pesticides, not just for turf but for all of agriculture, Waggoner says.

After making the first cut, the proposal was sent to the National Academy of Sciences, where two scientists were assigned to review it for about 60 days. After being scrutinized there, the proposal ended up in Columbus with the Ohio Department of Development, which was reviewing all the other proposals vying for grants.

A panel of scientists and business people gathered to determine the best proposals. They invited the proposers in to answer questions. Anderson said the panel consisted of about 18 people, and they grilled him, Waggoner, Birthisel and Syngenta’s Dennis Shepard for about 30 minutes.

“But we were ready,” Anderson said. Five million bucks proves that. ■

## “Quotable

**“You would think I’d have been paroled by now.”**

— Charles Joachim, certified superintendent of Champions Golf Club in Houston, on his 37 years as a superintendent.

**“To be honest with you, I don’t miss San Diego for one second.”**

— Mark Woodward, CEO of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) in Lawrence, Kan., hinting that he doesn’t miss the pressures or the politics that came with his previous job as certified superintendent and director of golf operations for the city of San Diego, including overseeing Torrey Pines.

## One ‘Big Audacious Goal’

RISE AIMS TO PROMOTE ITS MEMBERS’ PRODUCTS AS SAFE, GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE

By Larry Aylward, Editor-In-Chief

**T**he Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) doesn’t just have a goal to promote pesticides and fertilizers as safe products. The Washington-based association that represents pesticide and fertilizer producers, suppliers and distributors has a Big Audacious Goal.

The Big Audacious Goal aims to “own our rightful place in the green movement by re-asserting the essential value of our products in protecting a healthy and vital environment from the consequences of ineffective plant management.”

The Big Audacious Goal is also about RISE and its members going on the offensive to promote their products as safe, green and sustainable. Allen James, executive director of RISE, said it’s important for the association to go on the offensive.

“I don’t think it’s trite of me to say that we are at a critical juncture in our industry’s history — a true tipping point, if you will, in our association and in our industry,” James said.

James said opinions about pesticides and fertilizers are being based on emotion and opinion, not facts. “We are losing the scientific foundation upon which are industry is based,” he said, noting that’s why the Big Audacious Goal is needed.

Mike Bandy, marketing manager for Andersons Golf Products, says he likes the Big Audacious Goal and notes that it’s time green industry suppliers of pesticides and fertilizer step up and speak out in support of their products.

“We haven’t done that for a while,” Bandy added. “We’re a little modest. ... But I think we need to be willing to defend our products. We can’t be afraid to tell people what we do and the benefits that we provide.”

Paul Rea, director of the specialty products division for BASF and a RISE board member, said the Big Audacious Goal is “an important move for everyone committed to the industry.”

“Our products are extensively well tested and safe,” Rea added. “They deliver great benefits to the users and the environment overall. For us that means we need to put that message more often in front of people who may not be aware of it.”

Bandy said it’s time the green industry be viewed on the right side of the green movement.

“Even though we’re a major part of taking care of what’s considered green — turfgrass, landscape, ornamentals — we’ve gotten tagged as being negative,” he said. “And the reality is our products our very critical to the growth and sustainability of turfgrass, landscape and ornamentals. What the big audacious goal will hopefully do for us is help correct that. We’re part of the solution, not part of the problem.” ■

**PROVIDING STORMWATER SOLUTIONS FOR MAXIMUM PLAYABILITY**

N-12 Stormwater 4" - 60" Pipe

Engineered Drainage Structures

AdvantEDGE®

Basins, Channels and Grates

Visit us at the Golf Industry Show Booth 1855

The Most Advanced Name in Drainage Systems®

ADVANCED DRAINAGE SYSTEMS, INC.  
4640 TRUEMAN BOULEVARD, HILLIARD, OH 43026 USA  
www.ads-pipe.com 419-306-9849 / 314-614-3544

ADS