

# One Size Does Not Fit All In the Plant Nutrition Field

**F**ertilization practices and technologies have come a long way since the seeds for what would become LebanonTurf were first sown in Lebanon, Pa., more than 60 years ago. In those early days, research into the chemical elements that promoted healthy turf was not nearly the science that it has become. Nor were golf course superintendents and landscape managers the turfgrass geniuses that many are today.

Modern fertilization still incorporates the basic chemical elements — plus the help of Mother Nature — as essential ingredients for plant growth and vitality. But how those elements are combined and delivered to the plant is now based on advanced technologies never imagined 60 years ago.

Today, there's a growing understanding of the need for a comprehensive approach to plant physiological fitness. Our company is committed to bringing a complete line of products and the expertise required to help superintendents and turf managers find the solutions that meet their needs.

We understand that today's turf questions are far more complex than whether a foliar or granular approach is the best solution. At times a straightforward combination of basic ingredients is what's needed. At other times, the solution requires in-depth understanding of turf's metabolic function, photosynthetic rates and capacities, which has spawned the emerging field of biological plant nutrition.

This belief that one size does not fit all is the underlying motivation that has reshaped our company in the past several years.

In 2002, LebanonTurf introduced its patented Composite Technology to the fertilizer manufacturing process. Starting with premium forms of nitrogen sources and fusing them with phosphorus, potassium and micronutrients to create a homogeneous granule proved to be the breakthrough that produced improved particle dispersion, granule integrity and nitrogen activity.

In late 2008, parent company Lebanon Seaboard announced the acquisition of the Emerald Isle line of premium foliar fertilizer products. Emerald Isle True Foliar products produce excellent turfgrass playing conditions — consistent surfaces, ideal color and outstanding turf density — while providing seaplant extract and other beneficial supplements for root

growth, stress tolerance and disease resistance.

Complementing the Emerald Isle acquisition, Lebanon added Novozymes' turf and landscape business, including the Roots products and technologies, last July. In combination, the acquisitions reinforced LebanonTurf's commitment to the emerging field of biological plant nutrition, says Kathy Bishop, CEO and president of LebanonTurf. "Biology and microbes are fundamentally changing agronomic science and how nutrition is viewed and applied. This acquisition puts us on the front edge of that change," she adds.

"We now can offer customers access to the broadest and most complete offering of nutrition and physiological fitness products today — from fundamental N-P-K offerings to highly advanced biotechnology-based products," adds Dave Heegard, vice president and general manager of LebanonTurf.

The always-changing landscape of modern fertilization provides a rich subject for *Golfdom's* Fertility Report. Our company is pleased to help bring readers the insights of successful superintendents and landscape managers in the ongoing effort to answer not only the question of "What's working?" but also the logical follow-up query, "Why?" ■



**By Mike  
Sisti**

*Mike Sisti is marketing manager for LebanonTurf, a division of privately held Lebanon Seaboard Corp.*

