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Setting a Good Example

Elsewhere in this issue is a story about a new film on safe use of pesticides produced by the Ortho Division of California Chemical Co. Films on safety in pesticide handling aren't uncommon, but this venture is particularly praiseworthy, since it is, in Ortho spokesmen's words, "a non-commercial venture."

Products in the picture are referred to as "Brand X," and the producer has even offered to supply prints of the film to other manufacturers at cost. These firms can then affix their individual film leaders to identify the safety-preaching movie with their own operations.

This is setting a good example in a big way. Films such as these, which benefit the entire industry, from producer to custom applicator to customer, are costly to produce. It would be easy to capitalize on the impact of the picture with frequent references to this or that safety precaution the producing company carries out when it manufactures pesticides.

But, in addition to the immediate value this endeavor possesses intrinsically, it is worthwhile to reflect on the lesson posed here. We have sometimes heard of weed, turf, and tree maintenance companies which were reluctant to share company secrets at conferences, or which refuse to engage in free exchange of ideas with other firms, supposedly in fear of relinquishing a competitive edge of one kind or another.

This kind of thinking, while perhaps somewhat advantageous in the immediate instance, is suicidal in the long run. The future of the vegetation maintenance and control business rests in ever-increasing competence and professionalism. Whoever heard, for example, of a doctor who refused to discuss his medical discoveries because he feared he might lose a patient to one of his colleagues?

It may seem trite to say "Professional is as professional does," but this is one of those truisms which bears constant repeating.

Applicators should be eager to share talents with fellow businessmen just as one often wishes to share problems. Only in the thorough exchange of technical know-how and proficiency can be found the united front which vegetation control professionals must present to the public and to the lawmakers.

Only in taking the long-range view will your company continue to flourish. The future of the industry is by definition the future of every company which makes up that industry.

WEEDS AND TURF is the national monthly magazine of urban/industrial vegetation maintenance, including turf management, weed and brush control, and tree care. Readers include "contract applicators," arborists, nurserymen, and supervisory personnel with highway departments, railways, utilities, golf courses, and similar areas where vegetation must be enhanced or controlled. While the editors welcome contributions by qualified freelance writers, unsolicited manuscripts, unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes, cannot be returned.