



Dr. H. O. Kunkel, (l) dean of the college of agriculture at Texas A&M University, congratulates Dr. James R. Watson, vice president of consumer relations for the Toro Company. He was keynote speaker at the Texas Turfgrass Conference.

The Energy Crisis And The Turf Industry

WHAT caused it? How will it affect us, this energy crisis?

For whatever its causes and for whatever its effect, the energy crisis has become a topic of considerable discussion throughout the turf industry. One thing seems apparent—every segment of our country, including the turf industry, is being affected by it in some way or another.

There will be changes and alterations in the life style Americans have enjoyed for the past several decades. The energy crisis is one of the biggest factors contributing to today's uncertainty about the future.

At the 28th annual Texas Turfgrass Conference, held last December at Texas A&M University, one of the main topics of interest was the effect of the energy crisis on the turf industry. Over 350 turfgrass managers found there were no easy answers to the problem, but some light was shed on the subject by the conference's keynote speaker, Dr. James R. Watson, vice president of customer relations for the Toro Company.

Watson saw the energy situation

as a turfgrass industry opportunity. He spoke with confidence that the events of the past months will allow the industry to adjust without undue hardship.

Where is the turf industry heading? Dr. Watson thinks the beneficial effect of the energy situation will be seen in better maintenance and more utilization of turf facilities.

He pointed out that two factors overlooked by many are that demands for luxuries will help fuel the economy by creating jobs and the vast majority of Americans want and enjoy these non-essentials such as turf facilities.

Dr. Watson had some advice for turf managers. Don't fuel the flames of uncertainty by responding to, or passing along, idle, unfounded and often distorted rumors. In other words, don't become an alarmist.

"Keep abreast of all new developments in turf and related fields," he said. Emphasizing management, he continued, "The turf manager must know how much it costs to grow and to maintain his turf facility at the

standard or level desired by his club or controlling organization. He must know what his expenditures for equipment and supplies will produce in terms of lower operating costs. And he must be prepared to defend his budget."

Certain generalizations are expected as the energy situation continues. "Delays in delivery but not necessarily shortages of some products are evident," the executive predicted. He does concede the possibility of shortages of fertilizer and is certain of an increase in fertilizer costs as well as the cost of most other materials and supplies.

"There will be shortages and delays in delivery of petro-chemical products, particularly polypropylene derivatives," Dr. Watson advised turfgrass managers to be patient with suppliers, distributors and their manufacturers. "They will be doing everything possible to meet turf industry needs," he said.

"We will see tighter budgets and higher prices in general. And on top of this, there will be increased usage of most turf facilities. For those that do not experience increased usage, a change in their operating format is inevitable. But this will not necessarily be harmful. In fact, for the few facilities that experience decreases in utilization, there will be an opportunity to upgrade, repair and improve their facilities," he commented.

Decreased utilization may preclude the necessity of restricting or limiting the number of visitors to those facilities that already support maximum numbers.

"Reduced or limited travel will intensify the use of local, readily accessible golf courses and parks," Dr. Watson said.

The possibilities go on.

"It may speed the development and enjoyment of 'bowls'—outdoor bowling—a highly popular sport in other parts of the world."

And on.

"The resort golf course may experience more intensive play, because once there, the patron will spend most of his time at the facility rather than taking off in his automobile for one or two day sight-seeing trips. The resorts will be finding ways to get their customers to the facility."

The Toro official said besides the shortages of petro-chemicals and delays in some deliveries, the energy crisis will make it increasingly necessary to stock and to inventory critical parts. "There will possibly
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THE ENERGY CRISIS

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be changes in working hours to fit car pools, bus or train schedules. This could have an impact on the number of hours as well as the time of day, or night, that customers will use a given turf facility," he reasoned.

There will be greater emphasis on total cost of equipment operation. This will take into account not just the initial cost, but the cost of parts and service, down time, labor and other operating costs. In short, the emphasis will be on all factors determining the cost of work performed by a given piece of equipment.

In the near term, the environmental emphasis may become secondary to efforts to develop and utilize fuels more efficiently.

He said the shorter work week is already a reality in some industries, and is likely to spread to others. There may be rearrangement of working hours. All of which will lead to more leisure and greater utilization of facilities closer to home.

Dr. Watson called on the turf in-

dustry to move toward an understanding and utilization of the metric system. "We are one of the few nations who have not adopted this simple system. We cannot stand alone and expect to compete internationally, nor can we survive as isolationists, although we may desire to do so."

The need for improvement of managerial talent will become more critical as the need for control and analysis of all operational procedures increases.

"All that has happened in the past few months and all that will happen in the upcoming months can mean nothing but increased opportunity for all concerned with the turfgrass industry. The production and maintenance of good turf facilities is a vital and necessary part of our way of life," Dr. Watson concluded. □

Japanese Beetle Quarantine Extended In Six States

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is enforcing Japanese beetle quarantine restrictions on the movement of certain agricultural items in seven new counties in four

states.

Leo G. K. Iverson, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), said the action was taken after the discovery of Japanese beetles in Vermillion county, Ind.; Auglaize county, O.; Chesterfield and Horry counties, South Carolina; and Campbell, Knox, and McMinn counties in Tenn.

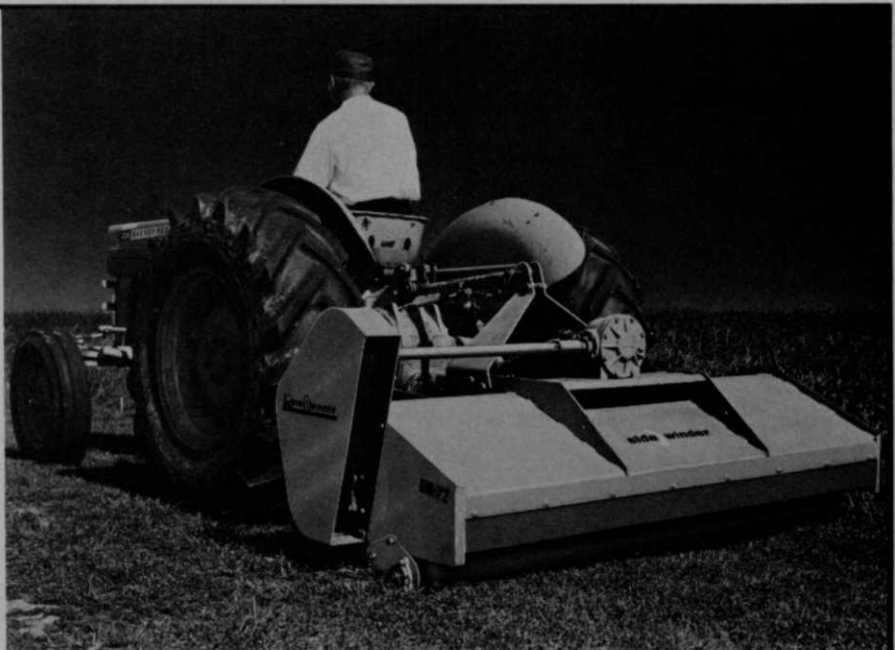
Meanwhile, quarantine restrictions are being extended to additional areas recently found infested within the following counties, which are already being regulated: Cobb, DeKalb, Elbert, Fayette, Fulton, and Henry in Ga.; Coles and Iroquois in Ill.; Clay, Clark, Montgomery and Greene, O., Parke, Putnam, and Sullivan in Ind.; Darlington in S. C.; and Greene, Monroe, Polk, and Washington in Tenn.

Quarantine regulations restrict the shipment, from infested to uninfested areas, of articles that might carry "hitchhiking" Japanese beetles. Such articles as plants with roots, grass sod, bulbs, etc., may be moved only after being inspected, treated (if necessary), and certified "pest free" by an APHIS or cooperating state agricultural inspector.

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