

NETTING FOR SOD

(from page 54)

the most practical way to assure soil stabilization.

"Long lead times are the exception in our business," says Steve. "We deliver palletized sod to job sites within 24 hours of order placement, and we spot the sod where the contractors want it. Customer acceptance of the netted sod has been excellent."

The ability to double sod production without adding land is a long-range economy appreciated by Cal-Turf. "We're working Vexar into our fields as crops are harvested at our California farms in Camarillo, San Juan Bautista, and El Toro," he says. "Of course, our overall sales will dictate how quickly we incorporate the net method in all our fields, but now we know we can double our business before we will need more land."

ASPA Summer Meeting Slated For Maryland

The Sheraton Inn — Northeast in Washington, D.C. (New Carrollton,

Maryland) will be the site of the ASPA annual convention and field days in 1974.

The Maryland Turf Grass Association is serving as the host organization and a program is being put together for both business and social pleasure.

For the first time, an inside display of equipment products and supplies will be held the night prior to the meeting; the area will be open as well on opening morning.

Field trips will be made by chartered buses to various sites in the area where demonstrations of the newest in sod production equipment will take place. "This is a real opportunity for personal inspection of various units that are available and an opportunity to update equipment and to see things in action," says Jack Kidwell, ASPA president.

Wage-Hour Litigation Draws ASPA Legal Help

Attorney Bill Harding, counsel for the American Sod Producers Association, has been directed by the association to file a special brief in-

behalf of a wage and hour suit involving a ASPA member.

Because of the nature of the case, the board has ruled that a decision by a court could have direct influence and bearing on every U.S. sod producer. Board members believe that the decision could have impact on the future of the sod industry and thus have solicited the services of ASPA attorney, Bill Harding.

The intervention will consist only of a brief filed by Harding. Financing is to be supported by sod producer members who are willing to make contributions outside the ASPA budget. Members may submit a voluntary contribution by check made out to ASPA, c/o Association Building, 9th and Minnesota, Hastings, Nebraska 68901, and noted thereon "legal brief."

Winter Sod Conference Attracts 160 Producers

An action-packed meeting about the business end of sod production was the drawing card for about 160 members of the American Sod Producers Association in early February.

Meeting in New Orleans in the heart of Bourbon Street's heavily sodded nightclub and fun district, members concentrated on the mid-winter conference theme: "How to make and keep a buck!" The two day cram session was essentially divided into two parts. Bill Harding, ASPA legal counsel, headed part one: dealing with government and how to survive.

Harding's legal expertise was manifested in his ability to explain the details of Federal laws affecting the sod producer. He has the subtle persuasiveness of a trial lawyer and the pounding authority of a distinguished college professor. His best quality; however, is in communicating the little known to the uninformed. He talks the sod producer's language in their terms.

Thus, when it came to the nitty-gritty of OSHA, unions, energy regulations, wage and hour regulations, Phase IV, and Interstate Commerce Commission matters, Harding competed most favorably with the attractions on Bourbon Street. The February meeting covered in more detail many of the aspects discussed by Harding during the ASPA summer meeting. Only this time, it was more real. Some sod producers

(continued on page 58)

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WITHOUT TERRA TACK

WINTER SOD CONFERENCE

(from page 56)

have been stung by Federal regulations, particularly wage and hour laws. The Nebraska attorney quickly sifted out the thorn and dove for the roots of the problem.

It might be summarized that Harding awakened a need among sod producers to have in their possession up-to-the-minute information regarding Federal laws that affect their business.

A second speaker during the first session was Stu DeBruicker of the Harvard Business School. He led the group through an exercise in marketing and planning, using case history and analytical approach.

Section two was show-and-tell. Following the well-known psychology that sod producers want to know more about what other sod producers are doing, this session passed the ball back to the membership. Then the fun began.

Don White, Iowa Nursery Sod Corp., Des Moines, discussed how he sells firewood in the winter as an extra source of income. Bill Latta, Princeton Turf of Kansas City, Mo., outlined his maintenance procedures for equipment repairs during the off

season. John Dol, Cookstown, Ontario, Canada, and Dale Habenicht, H & E Sod Nursery Inc., Tinley Park, Ill. reported on trucking operations during the winter months.

Ted DeLalio, DeLalio Sod Farms, Inc., Dix Hills, N.Y., Norm LeGrande, Lincoln, Nebr. and Tom Thornton, Thorntons Turf Nursery, Elgin, Ill. all spoke on their experience with routing orders.

One interesting discussion given by Jim Reynolds, Reynolds Turf Farms, Inc., Brighton, Colo. involved pasturing sheep on sod. H. B. Michelson, Michelson Ranch, Elk Grove, Calif. reported on his cattle feeding operation to utilize turf clippings.

Allen Freeborg, Henderson, Colo. presented his views on maintaining customer relations. He spoke on credit and collections in the sod business. Along the same line, Mel Smilsky, Cookstown, Ontario, Canada, reported on how to obtain replacements. Guarantees of sod installation, quality, etc. were discussed by George Schaaf, Patterson, Calif. Problems in relations with customers were brought out by Howard Fairty, Milliken, Canada.

Other sod producers recalled their

experiences under the general heading of personnel management. Bill Johnson, Halmich Sod Nurseries, Inc., East Lansing, Mich., talked about acquiring and keeping field help. The owner-manager concept was explored by John Hope, Manderley Turf Farms, Ltd., North Gower, Ontario, Canada. Emory Patton, Turf Center Inc., Silver Springs, Md. pointed out ways to increase employee productivity. Cecil Collings, Green Valley Turf Farms, Inc., presented his views and experiences with delegating work.

"Everyone attending had an opportunity to discuss his problems and hear about other experiences," commented Jack Kidwell, ASPA president. "We had a standing room only sell out at the banquet which featured a presentation of Mardi Gras Preview."

Sod producers from other countries were an integral part of this year's meeting. Ragnar Browall, Falkoping, Sweden, flew in from his northern home to learn more about sod production U.S. style.

Meeting site of the summer meeting will be the Sheratan Inn—Northeast in Washington D. C. (New Carrollton, Md.). Dates are July 16-19. □

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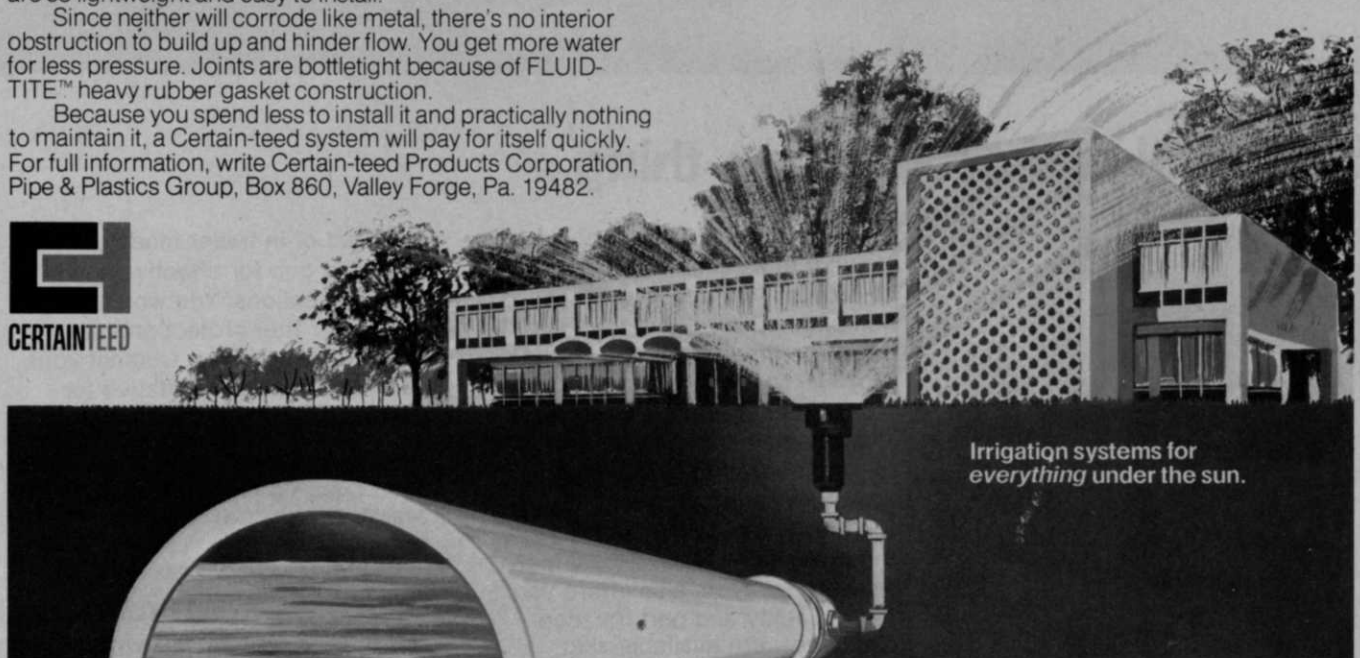
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