

Employee Owned Stock Plan Yields New Morale, Profits

A Rochester, N.Y. tree and landscape firm has found a unique way to stimulate higher productivity among employees by letting them purchase company stock.

The Monroe Tree Experts, Inc. and its subsidiaries Monroe Tree & Landscape, Inc. and Lewis Tree Service, Inc. have designed the plan for non-union employees over 21 who have worked for the company a year or longer. Through the arrangement, employees can receive stock at retirement.

Monroe Tree Experts initiated the program to function like this: the company makes an annual contribution to a trust fund held by Central Trust Company. The bank then purchases Monroe Tree Experts stock which can be sold only by the company or present shareholders. It cannot be traded.

Each year an independent appraisal firm will determine the value of the shares and send employees a statement of the number of shares and its value which they have invested at the bank in their name. The employees are 100 percent vested after six years or at normal retirement age of 60. Upon retirement, they may sell the stock back to the company or to others in the plan.

Thomas Terry, Jr., Monroe Tree Experts president, told WEEDS TREES & TURF the program cost \$40,000 to launch with the help of auditors and lawyer Thomas A. Stander of the law firm of Woods, Oviatt, Gilman, Sturman and Clarke. Stander patterned the plan specially for the company. Approval of the Internal Revenue Service was also necessary.

With the company paying for the stock plan, it is probably the first tree and landscape firm to use employee stock ownership. The plan does not interfere with the company's retirement plan, however. About 100 of 250 employees have joined.

The plan also enables the company to receive a tax break. Since it

can allocate no more than 15 percent of its payroll to the plan, it is taxed only on income excluding money allotted for employee stock ownership.

Beyond its credits as a distinctive plan and tax break, Terry notes how the plan has made employees feel personally successful and, in turn, helped the company enjoy greater productivity and profit.

"Basically, we did it for an incentive for our key employees who become stockholders in our company," he explained. "By doing this, the original owners could sell the stock and the employees become stockholders. We're making our own market."

Regarding company morale, he points out, "The production has picked up. They're very much more interested. It's a great attitude people in the field and in the state have. They feel they own the company, too."

Energy Prices Grip Future Of Irrigation Crop Yields

Although high costs of energy hit everyone, farmers are especially affected by the increases.

Natural gas prices, in particular, are crucial in agriculture since it supplies over three quarters of all energy used for irrigating crops. Natural gas also pumps the water for crops as well as providing energy for drying crops.

Just as irrigation can supplement the need caused by low rainfall, much of the crop yield directly relates to crops grown from irrigated land.

In the example of Texas, 60 percent of all crop production comes from irrigation, although irrigation is done over only 35 percent of the land, according to Robert L. Haney, writing in *The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station report of Texas A&M University*.

Haney said if natural gas prices exceed the present \$1.30 per thousand feet, farmers will be left with some dire alternatives. They may be forced to get more land at a lower price, scale down their standard of

living or default on their land payments.

But all is not lost, however. Research is looking into other alternatives such as increased water pumping and efficiency, although this represents great expense. A definite advantage is development of short season crops, such as a new cotton, which uses 33 percent less energy while increasing lint yield per acre 30 percent. This also requires less fertilizer, pesticides and water and fewer field operations. It may hold one answer to this serious problem of energy costs.

Tree Service Merger Expands Market Area

John and Richard Hawthorne of Hawthorne Bros. Tree Service, Inc. and Gary R. Mullane of Mullane Tree Service have announced a merger. The tree care and landscaping company will be known as Hawthorne Bros. Tree Service, Inc. with Mullane Tree Service as a division.

Although the Hawthorne Brothers are located in Bedford Hills, N.Y. and Mullane's service is in North Salem, their market is expanding to cover Connecticut, lower Westchester and Rockland County and northern Westchester County.

Chevron Announces Expansion Of Fertilizer Production

Chevron Chemical Co., San Francisco, has awarded a contract to the D. M. Weatherly Corp., Atlanta, for a third nitric acid plant at its Kennewick, Wash., fertilizer production complex. Completion of the new nitric unit is scheduled for early 1978.

The additional nitric plant is part of a \$43 million expansion of the Kennewick facility. When complete the new nitric acid unit will have a production capacity of more than 550 tons a day and will increase Chevron's output of this important fertilizer raw material to more than 900 tons a day.

STRAIGHT TALK FROM YOUR DITCH WITCH MAN

ALCA Opens Competition For 1976 Landscaping Awards

The Associated Landscape Contractors of America has opened competition for its Seventh Annual Environment Improvement Awards Program.

Entrants are welcome from all of the landscape industry and may or may not be association members.

Categories for the competition are landscape contracting, landscape maintenance, erosion control and interiorscape projects, a new category.

Entries should include a set of working designs or planting plans (maintenance contractors may omit this), a set of color slides showing the development of the project and a written description of the project. Entry fee is \$55 for non-members, \$45 for members and deadline is Nov. 1, 1976.

Entries will be judged by a jury of professionals and journalists who will make recommendations for awards to the Awards Committee. Jim Gibbs of Atlanta is committee chairman. Separate judging will be done for each of seven geographic regions.

For more information write ALCA, 1750 Old Meadow Road, McLean, Va. 22101.

FTGA Plans Conference, Show For Orlando October 10-14

The Florida Turf-Grass Association Management Conference and Show is scheduled for October 10-14 at the Sheraton Towers Hotel in Orlando.

The event, expected to attract about 1,000 people, will feature a "Down to Earth Turf Session" and 27 special speakers. The main address will be Dr. Kenneth Tefertiller's speech "Turf-Florida's Jolly Green Giant" as part of the program theme, "Turf from Surf to Surf."

Over 60 national manufacturers will display equipment and/or products.

For more information, contact Ms. Nona Murphy, executive secretary, 1520 Edgewater Dr., Suite E, Orlando, Fla. 32804.



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NEWS *continued*

Cherry Aphid Wrecks Season On Trees, Mustard Plants

Season is underway for the black cherry aphid as it feasts upon its favorite food, sweet cherries.

Aphid damage is recognized by the distorted terminal growth on the leaves. This shiny coating is called 'honeydew'.

Black cherry aphids begin life

after overwintering on the tree and hatching as the buds are opening becoming green. By spring and early summer, wingless aphids are developing which will distort the leaves and then take their destruction to watercress, peppergrass and other mustard family plants.

Malathion, guthion, diazinon or parathion are effective in controlling the aphids. When applying them, give careful, thorough cover-

age of the terminal growth and pay special attention to the minimum days waiting time from last application to harvest.

Calcium Arsenate One Way For Control of Poa Annua

A concern with use of herbicides for control of *Poa annua* is the injurious effects of the herbicide on desired turfgrasses, according to Dr. A. J. Turgeon of the University of Illinois horticulture department.

"If a preemergence herbicide reduces the spreading growth of a turfgrass, it may not grow into voids even if environmental conditions favor rapid growth," he reported at the Kentucky Turfgrass Conference held last year at Barren River Lake State Resort Park, Lucas, Ken. Proceedings of the conference were published recently.

"Similarly, the application of a postemergence herbicide may not provide satisfactory results if it injures the desired turfgrass too severely," he said.

"Calcium arsenate is a unique herbicide in that it has both pre-emergence and postemergence activity," he said. Thus, it can reduce the existing stand of annual bluegrass and also preclude new annual bluegrass development from seed germination. However, calcium arsenate application will not result in healthy turf where environmental conditions are unfavorable.

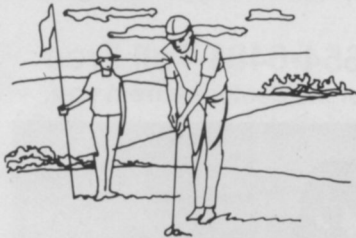
He said research at the University of Illinois has shown complete control of annual bluegrass with calcium arsenate in closely clipped Kentucky bluegrass turf was followed by the development, and eventual dominance, of creeping bentgrass in the turf. Hence, one problem may be replaced by another following herbicide use where the growth requirements of a desired turfgrass are ignored, he said.

Also, where calcium arsenate was applied for several years consecutively to Kentucky bluegrass, earthworm activity was eliminated and substantial thatch developed. The thatched turfs were observed to be more wilt-prone during mid-summer stress periods and *Helminthosporium* disease incidence was severe in spring.

Horticultural Perlite...

The multi-purpose soil conditioner for turf, containers and propagation.

Professional landscapers and grounds maintenance men have long made Horticultural Perlite one of their main 'tricks of the trade'. It's an ideal soil conditioner that



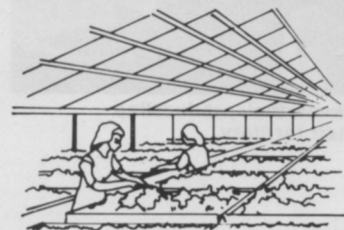
helps promote "a sea of green velvet". You see, by preventing compaction, it keeps the soil loose enabling more oxygen to reach and help nourish the root system. And because Horticultural Perlite also retains three to four times its weight in moisture, it keeps the root network moist long after watering. The result is a beautiful blanket of green growing on a thick healthy, robust root-system that not only keeps grass beautiful, but prevents **golf courses, institutional and campus**

lawns and residential lawns from getting soggy, mushy or soft underfoot.

Nurserymen find Horticultural Perlite practically indispensable for **container grown plants and shrubs** because of its ability to retain moisture, and to keep the mixture around the root environment loose. It is also a great "starting mixture" for transplanted stock as it helps reduce the incidences of transplant shock. And because Horticultural Perlite is sterile and non-toxic, it won't rot, decompose, disintegrate or break down. Nor will it help promote insect life. Being light in weight, Horticultural Perlite makes container moving light work and shipping costs a lighter expense. It's not only ideal for your plants — Horticultural Perlite is ideal for your business.



For **plant propagation**, Horticultural Perlite soil mix is almost as important as sunlight. Because of its water-retention characteristics, this mixture maintains an even



distribution of moisture to stimulate fast root development in cuttings and to speed seed germination. Most important, by keeping the starting mixture loose, Horticultural Perlite permits a freer flow of oxygen to help nurture the new growth. This also makes transplanting easy; without root damage; and without undo shock. Horticultural Perlite is inert matter that can last indefinitely in your seed beds. It is sterile, odor-free and can't promote insects or bugs. It is a

great asset for the new beginnings of plant life.

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