

WEEDS TREES & TURF SURVEYS THE CONTRACT APPLICATION MARKET

What types of contract chemical application service does your company provide?

Type of application	Percentage performing this type of application
Residential lawns	70
Commercial property	68
Industrial property	56
Municipal	14
Agriculture	13
Utility Rights-of-way	13
Nurseries	13
Golf courses	13
Orchards	11
Tree farms	8
Highway rights-of-way	8
Railroad rights-of-way	7
Sod farms	5

WEEDS TREES & TURF conducted a readership survey of our readers involved in the contract applicator business. Of those readers, 87% were involved in ground application of chemicals. Six percent did aerial application and seven percent were involved in both ground and aerial.

We found that our readers in this category handle approximately 3,000,000 accounts, covering some 380,000,000 acres. The annual gross revenue from contract spray application was projected to be 921,000,000. The median was \$40,000 in a range of answers from \$300-\$10,000,000.

The businesses themselves ranged in age from new to 70 years, with the average age being 17 years.

Most of these businesses have 1-3 employees, however, some employ as many as 200. The average annual salary of these people was \$12,640. This figure was inflated somewhat by single owners of companies, who tended to pay themselves very well. The median salary was \$10,500.

Sixty-eight percent of the employees were company trained. Only 22% of the employees were college

Type of Applicator	Percentage of contractors using that type
Liquid tank spray truck	74
Dry spreader	48
Boom sprayer	23
Mistblower	10
Aerial	10
Hand sprayer	3

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trained, with 3% being trained by the state extension service and five percent trained by the owner of the company, himself.

In asking how many full-time employees had passed a state or federal certification test for restricted chemical application, we got answers most often in the range of one to five. There was no pattern to the responses, however. Some com-

panies would have no certified employees, some would have all certified, some had only a fraction certified.

Equipment value was projected to be \$504,000,000 with a range of \$200 to \$4,000,000 worth of equipment owned by any one contractor.

Annual chemical expenditures are projected as \$205,486,000 or roughly 22% of gross revenue. An-

nual equipment expenditure projections could not be made due to a lack of responses to this question. The varied periods of useful life of equipment also made such a projection unreliable.

Survey results were obtained by estimating the contract applicator market at a modest 4,333 firms.

EQUIPMENT	Small Companies		Medium Companies		Large Companies		Total	
	No. Owned	No. Plan To Buy	No. Owned	No. Plan To Buy	No. Owned	No. Plan To Buy	No. Owned	No. Plan To Buy
Fixed Wing Aircraft	—	—	270	60	730	90	1,000	150
Liquid Chemical Applicators	4,360	760	1,600	210	6,600	240	12,560	1,210
Granular Chemical Applicators	3,640	360	1,790	120	1,500	270	6,930	750
Spray Tanks	3,060	1,060	1,640	60	2,240	330	6,940	1,450
Hose Reels	2,670	520	1,450	210	1,900	330	6,020	1,060
Complete Power Unit Sprayer	2,180	240	450	—	2,550	270	5,180	510
Pumps:								
Centrifugal	790	120	2,550	60	1,820	425	5,160	605
Piston	2,940	300	1,200	90	3,120	60	7,260	450
Utility Trucks	2,760	580	700	120	1,490	90	4,950	790
Tractors:								
8-12 H.P.	970	—	490	30	120	—	1,580	—
21-60 H.P.	970	—	180	30	1,360	—	2,510	—

Chemical Supply	Small Company Annual Purchases	Medium Sized Annual Purchases	Large Co.	Total
Dry Fertilizer	\$33,000,000	\$22,700,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$59,700,000
Liquid Fertilizer	8,800,000	3,800,000	6,600,000	19,200,000
Post Emergence Herbicide	13,600,000	5,500,000	36,000,000	55,100,000
Pre-Emergence Herbicide	5,170,000	7,300,000	16,500,000	28,970,000
Insecticide	12,900,000	4,700,000	17,400,000	35,000,000
Systemic Fungicide	350,000	354,000	175,000	879,000
Contact Fungicide	711,000	1,126,000	4,800,000	6,637,000

Small companies are those with an annual gross revenue of up to \$75,000.
 Medium companies are those with an annual gross revenue ranging from \$75,001 up to \$250,000.
 Large companies are those with an annual gross revenue of over \$250,000.