

GREEN INDUSTRY NEWS

TURF

Sod producers set for field days in Spokane

The American Sod Producers Association will hold its summer meeting and field days for the first time in Northwest seed country, July 19-21 in Spokane, Washington.

"Between 350 and 400 sod producers and suppliers will be attending," according to ASPA President Glenn Rehbein. The convention will be hosted by seed producers and processors at the Sheraton Spokane. Doyle Jacklin, marketing manager for Jacklin Seed Co., is the convention chairman.

A tour of seed production areas and idea exchanges with seed growers and processors is planned. Field demonstrations will take place at the Schneidmiller Sod Farm in Liberty Lake, Washington, and the George Thayer facilities in northern Idaho.

A salmon bake and a special ladies program are planned.

Persons interested in attending should contact the American Sod Producers Association, 9th & Minnesota, Hastings, Ne. 68901. (402) 463-5691.

Broader experiences with netting in sod planting and increased uses of sludge as a fertilizer were among topics highlighting the Midwinter Conference of the American Sod Producers Association held Feb. 12 to 15 at the Nassau Beach Hotel in the Bahamas.

Over 300 delegates attended the seminars, which this winter focussed not only on sod production but also included discussions of the economics of farming, from tax matters to wage and hour laws and application of insurance programs.

A diversified group of speakers ranged from Dr. Paul Hall, of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, who spoke on uses of sewage sludge in sod production, to L. S. Wilson, of the E.I. DuPont Company, who gave a stimulating talk on the importance of communications in business and home life.

Other speakers were Doyle Jacklin, of the Jacklin Seed Co., Spokane, Wa.; ASPA legal counsel William A. Harding; Paul Smith, CLU, of Fringe Benefits Design in Kansas City, Mo.; John Hope, of Manderley Turf Farms, North Gower, Ontario, Canada; Charles Lain of Pine Island Turf Nursery, Sussex, N.J., and Allen McDowell, of Alexander & Alexander, Lincoln, Neb.

Against a detailed scientific outline by Dr. Hall on the application of sludge in sod growing, Tom Thornton, of Thornton's Turf Nursery, Elgin, Ill., reported fine practical results after a year's use of "digested sludge."

"Once it catches on, it will benefit just about everybody," Thornton said. "We get the sludge free from Chicago's Metropolitan Sanitary Department, and its immediately recognized advantages are the low cost and its existing values in nitrogen, phosphates, potash and trace elements."



The picturesque jagged peaks of the Cascade Range located between Seattle and Spokane.

RECLAMATION

Grants from coal tax to be distributed soon

Landscape contractors may be able to cash in on a federal government program to reclaim abandoned coal mines when an estimated \$98 million is distributed starting this summer.

Officials from the Office of Surface Mining, a new agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior, said it would decide by mid-May on project sites.

Almost \$34 million was collected from October through December



View of the Spokane convention area.

from a tax on coal mined by operators to support the reclamation program. Surface mining officials hope to collect \$140 million during the program's first year.

The abandoned mine reclamation fund is part of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. In November, Joan Davenport, assistant secretary for Energy and Minerals in the Interior Department, asked the 50 governors to submit a list of sites in need of reclamation. About 300 proposals were made, and the Office of Surface Mining has narrowed that list to between 20-30 sites as of late April.

Potentially hazardous mines, such as those near school buildings or others that could cause personal injury, will be the first projects chosen for reclamation.

About \$70 million will be returned to the states during this first year so they can administer their own programs. The federal government will keep 20 percent of the money and finance its own projects.

Ray Booker, a division chief for the abandoned mine program, said the federal government will be "working as closely as we can with the states." He said contractors should contact departments in their state governments most likely to handle a reclamation project for information on bidding procedures and other details about the program.

Many states will administer the program through their Department of Natural Resources. Others may have agencies for mining or, as in Oklahoma, a Conservation Commission.

NURSERY

AAN offers advice on loss deductions

The American Association of Nurserymen's legal counsel has offered the following thoughts as to the availability of federal income tax casualty loss deductions arising out of the recent extraordinarily cold winter conditions in the North and East and drought conditions in the West.

The IRS takes the position that damage caused by drought cannot be a deductible casualty loss, since it does not occur suddenly. Nevertheless, some courts have allowed such deductions, and taxpayers may wish to seek legal or accounting advice on such cases.

Plant damage caused by freezing conditions can be a deductible casualty loss, where the freeze is unusual. It depends upon normal conditions for the area.

Inventory losses not covered by insurance do not generate a casualty loss deduction because they will automatically result in a greater deduction for cost of goods sold. Where covered by insurance, inventory losses may either be reflected in cost of goods sold based on closing inventory, with inclusion of the insurance recovery as gross income; or alternatively, the taxpayer may ignore the insurance recovery and remove the loss from the cost of goods sold.

In the case of landscaping on a customer's business premises, the taxpayer may claim a loss based on the "before" and "after" value of the damaged plants, but the loss may not exceed the adjusted basis (depreciated cost). There is no need to consider the effect of the loss on the value of the entire property.

The legal question, where the plants represent landscaping of non-business property, is the amount of loss reflecting the "before" and "after" value of the entire premises. As a practical matter, the IRS recognizes a replacement cost invoice or estimate as reasonable evidence of the loss in value of the property, unless there is reason to believe that restoration of the particular plant is not necessary, or would enhance the value of the property above its precasualty value.

Difficult questions arise in the case of damage to trees or other specimens which are too large to replace with plants of a similar size, since it would not be possible to obtain evidence of replacement cost. The IRS takes the position that shade tree appraisal methods may not be used, and that it is necessary to obtain a "before" and "after" appraisal of the entire property by an expert real estate appraiser.

The AAN in cooperation with the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers and other landscape groups, was unsuccessful last year in seeking an amendment to the IRS regulations to overcome this problem. The possibility of a legislative solution is under active consideration.



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UPDATE

Labor reform act has pro-union effect

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States says legislation currently before the Senate would make it much easier for a union to organize a non-union work force.

The Chamber's Labor Relations Attorney G. John Tysse told WEEDS TREES & TURF, "The greatest adverse effect will be on the smaller non-union company such as the landscaper. A provision in the Act permits union organizers to come on business property to talk to non-union employees if the owner talks to employees in the same way. An outdoor situation like landscaping makes it even easier."

Under the Act a union could force an election within 21 days of petitioning the National Labor Relations Board. "An employer hasn't enough time to react to union pressure in 21 days," Tysse stresses.

2,4,5-T RPAR involves 424 different products

A rebuttable presumption against registration issued by EPA last week against 2,4,5-T will affect more than 424 products of 122 companies and 21 products with former state registrations pending for federal registration. EPA cited "industry's apparent inability to produce 2,4,5-T without TCDD contamination" and said "TCDD must also be considered when assessing 2,4,5-T by the agency's risk criteria."

Oncogenic effects were a major factor for the RPAR. EPA summarized, "The studies indicated that 2,4,5-T containing less than 0.05 p.p.m. TCDD or TCDD alone have oncogenic effects in two mouse strains and one rat strain. Since 2,4,5-T, as currently formulated, contains TCDD (at a maximum amount of 0.099 p.p.m.), a rebuttable presumption against the registration of 2,4,5-T products has arisen because of the oncogenic effect of 2,4,5-T and its contaminant TCDD."

EPA bases none of its RPAR on bioaccumulation or other environmental effects, giving 2,4,5-T a clean bill in many studies cited in the RPAR. A National Academy of Sciences report was cited which said 2,4,5-T and TCDD have never been detected in drinking water in tests sensitive to parts per trillion. Concerning food EPA summarized, "FDA Market Basket Survey Samples from 1969 through July 1974 showed no 2,4,5-T residues (detection limit: 0.02 p.p.m.) in 155 total diet samples involving 1,869 food composites."

Rebuttals to the presumption against registration are due at the agency by June 5.

Reregistration costs may soar 50 percent

A draft of a report by EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs indicates that guidelines change could increase the cost of reregistration from \$691 million to \$949 million. The guideline changes involve Section Three of the revised Pesticide Law (FIFRA).

Some of the figures and assessments in the draft include:

- Cost of meeting the guidelines' data requirements for new active ingredient nonfood use, \$375,000.
- Consumer costs of the guidelines, 10¢ to 35¢ per capita per year during the 1980's.
- For a major agricultural pesticide, the one-time cost of compliance with the guidelines, including filling data gaps, would be about \$1 million.
- Some very small formulators, which, for example formulate only one product, might go out of the pesticide business if they have to meet the data requirements of the guidelines.

TURF

Adjuvants may reduce crabgrass germination

Tests conducted under growth chamber and greenhouse conditions at the Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station has shown that several wetting agents can be effective in reducing germination of hairy crabgrass seeds, according to Dr. William H. Mitchell, University of Delaware turf specialist. Mitchell's tests have shown that both dormant and geractively germinating seed are damaged by wetting agents. However, there was rarely a complete kill in any given test.

Subjecting treated seed to sub-freezing temperatures for a period of 12 hours increased the effectiveness of the wetting agent. Since crabgrass plants are easily destroyed by freezing temperatures, Dr. Mitchell speculates that using wetting agents prior to cold weather may have the effect of triggering germination, thus setting the stage for further seed damage.

Dr. Mitchell presented information regarding his research at a recent meeting of the Northeastern Weed Science Society. Part of this research has been supported by a grant from the Delaware Turfgrass Association.

LAWN CARE

Manufacturers form lawn and garden group

An association of lawn and garden manufacturers was formed in April with the goal of establishing a cohesive force that will further the growth of the lawn and garden industries.

The Lawn and Garden Manufacturers Association is headquartered in Chicago according to LAGMA President Edward Scofield, executive vice-president of Rapid-Gro Corp., Danville, Ill.

The group's vice-president, E. Olansky of Science Products Co., Chicago, said there has been great interest in membership and that a number of working committees have already been formed. Interested persons may contact LAGMA, One Illinois Center, 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601.

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1978 officers for the Virginia Turfgrass Council are: (front row, left to right) Rex H. Harris, Eagle Haven Golf Course, assistant treasurer; Earl H. Odell, Todd Farm Equipment Co., secretary-treasurer; Gus C. Constantino, Wilson Feed & Seed Co., president; Charles Moss, Richmond Power Equipment Co., director; (back row) directors: George C. Baker, Dixon & Van; Stephen P. Skowronski, Meadowbrook Country Club; Archie Goode, Brookside Golf Club; Richard J. Fisher, Lake Monticello Country Club; and W. Ray Weekly, Prince William Turf Farms. Kenneth P. Giedd, Hermitage Country Club, vice president was not present.

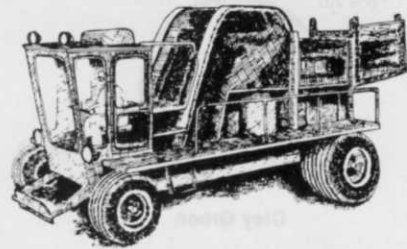
**Virginia turfgrass show
draws 280 delegates**

The 18th annual Virginia Turfgrass Conference drew 280 persons this year, in spite of the weather. The conference is sponsored each year by Virginia Tech's Extension Division and the Virginia Turfgrass Council. With "Emerging Trend for Better Turf" as the theme this year, the conference was attended by golf course superintendents from Washington D.C. and Williamsburg, National Park Service officials, and maintenance personnel for the marine base at Quantico, among others.

The Virginia Turfgrass Council presented its R. D. Cake Memorial Award to Lee Dieter, superintendent of the Washington Golf Course at Arlington, Va. Dieter is a past president of the council and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents. He is a Pennsylvania native and 1959 graduate of Penn State.

The industry service award went to Richard E. Schmidt, associate professor of agronomy at Virginia Tech and director of the Turfgrass Research Center. A native of Michigan, Schmidt joined Virginia Tech in 1960 as an instructor after completing his bachelor's and master's degrees at Penn State. His doctorate came from Virginia Tech in 1965. He has directed research at the center since its founding in 1967. The award recognizes his nearly two decades of turf research.

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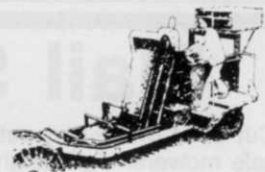


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