

By Bruce F. Shank, Editor

## Employment shift could boost competition

Be prepared . . . your car mechanic of today may be your competitor tomorrow.

Hard times in industries which employ vast numbers of people can cause a deluge of new small businesses in fields which appear simple on the surface. Horticulture is one of those fields that on the surface appears simple and one that will no doubt attract many auto and steel workers in the next two years.

From our position we can gauge this movement from requests we receive on how to start a landscape business, lawn care business, etc. We call them "Tell Me All There Is To Know" letters. So far we detect no increase in this type of request, but feel it is about to happen as layoffs lengthen and subpay funds dry up.

Before it happens, some thought should be given to dealing with this influx of competitors. We must impress upon them that the market is not a simple one and that years of experience and training are needed to be successful. The situation supports the contention of industry associations that togetherness is beneficial for the protection and progress of our various Green Industries.

However, it would be careless to assume that these persons will jump untrained into our markets. Some determined and proud workers will train prior to market entrance; obtain experience under a good contractor, superintendent, or arborist; and be partly trained by 1981. In fact, some of these people may make an important contribution to the Green Industries in the next five years due to their drive, pride, and desire.

This only further reinforces the need to stay on top of technological advances, discuss problems with fellow professionals, and constantly impress your customer with your concern for their property or business. Show them you are a member of a professional organization, certified where applicable, and involved in constant training to provide them with the latest and best technology.

People don't remain unemployed. They change occupations and force people in other fields to prove their

worth or take their place in the unemployment line. Harsh but true, no job is guaranteed just on the basis of time. We must keep up-to-date, alert, and valuable to our customers.

## Turf management series begins with seed market

The staff of Weeds Trees & Turf has been interviewing many of the industry founders over the last two months in preparation for a six-part series on the history and development of the turf industry beginning in July.

The first section will concern the history, development and future of the seed market. We will cover the steps taken by early agronomists to establish turf types just for fine turf areas. We trace occurrences from 1985 to 1980, and then tell you what is coming in the next ten years. After reading this special feature you'll have a good idea of the background of the turf seed market.

For example, how the turf seed market, originally based in the Midwest, moved to the Northwest. While early Kentucky bluegrass seed companies used machinery to strip the seedheads of the mature grasses in the fields, modern growers in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho mow the carefully weeded fields first, let the swathed crop dry in the field, and then use a combine to pick up and separate the seed from the stems. The difference means tremendously increased yields, purer seed, and improved germination of seed.

We'll trace today's improved varieties back to various parks and country clubs where natural stands of hardy grasses were discovered, collected for seed, and bred for hardiness and resistance.

In August we cover the history and development of the sod industry in similar fashion. September will cover seed and sod installation. October begins a look into current turf management practices and the history behind them. November and December issues will probe turf disease and insect control. **WTT**



**Fiesta**  
TURF-TYPE PERENNIAL RYEGRASS

There's a reason why Fiesta has become one of the most popular varieties in such a short time. To find out why ask your local seed dealer or write:

**PICKSEED**  
PICKSEED WEST, Inc.  
BOX 888, TANGENT, OREGON 97389 (503) 926-8886

Write 114 on free information card