

# GREEN INDUSTRY NEWS

## Sod Convention Brings Industry Together

Manufacturers of sod equipment, seed distributors, turfgrass researchers, and sod growers from throughout Canada and the U.S. exchanged ideas at the American Sod Producers Association summer convention and field days in Edmonton, Alberta.

Under three days of July sunny skies, close to 600 ASPA members, families, and representatives of the turfgrass industry together enjoyed serious discussion and Western Canadian style entertainment.

When most arrived on Sunday, Edmonton was in full swing of its celebration of Klondike Days which relive an era past when settlers first began flooding the area for the rush of gold. Townspeople dressed in colorful garb of those days strutted through the downtown streets blocked to traffic.

Business began on Monday with a panel discussion in the host Four Seasons Hotel on "survival during an economic recession." Ray Johnson of Shamrock Turf Nurseries moderated the panel of speakers chosen from various geographic regions. Although all the speakers agreed that nothing is certain with the economy and that if they knew the answers they'd be millionaires, they said housing projections range to 23 million in the 80's, a good indicator of what the sod business will be.



**Equipment innovations** introduced at the Sod Producers summer show enthralled the crowd. The barn (background) housed indoor exhibits and a few mosquitos.

Big Lake Sod Farm, Ltd. hosted the irrigation demonstrations Monday afternoon and on Tuesday Don Stumborg, convention chairman, hosted the field demonstrations and exhibits on his 2,900-acre Gem Sod Farms. Observers could not come close enough to the new equipment and innovations revealed.

Roseman Mower Corp., Nunes Mfg., and Brouwer Turf Equipment demonstrated their latest mowers; Nunes Turf Vac Corp., and Brouwer picked up the clippings with their sweepers; Delmarva Textile Co. and Conwed Corp. exhibited netting;

Spyder Mfg. Co., Princeton Mfg. Co., and Brouwer showed how their forklifts handle sod pallets, which became filled from the work of harvesters made by Brouwer, Nunes, and Princeton. Ryan/OMC Lincoln demonstrated its sod cutter and Ferguson Fabrication ran a test of its sod extruder.

The manufacturers, constantly improving their equipment for the sod industry, showed efficiency in all areas — fuel, labor, and time. Observers said that some of these improvements would revolutionize the industry.

### NURSERY

## Nurserymen's show faces heat and inflation

An optimistic attitude overcame the scorching temperatures and fears of inflation at the American Association of Nurserymen's 105th Annual Convention and Trade Show held in Kansas City, MO, July 12-16.

With Kansas City and other parts of the country facing temperatures of 105° to 110°, over 1,300 nursery men and women attended the convention activities. The activities included 77 exhibits represented by 63 firms; a tour to the Rosehill Garden Growing Field, which held a demonstration of nursery equipment for wholesale growers; a landscape/garden center tour covering successful garden centers in the city's suburbs; and a new program designed for juniors and teens to make this year's convention a family affair.

Fighting inflation and developing employee incentives were two of the primary themes explored in the general sessions.

Dr. Jerry Robertson of Ohio State University said that the market increase in the landscape industry, which was 12.6 percent per year since 1967, has only been 4.2 percent with inflation. Robertson said the production of nursery crops,

landscape products, and services to the trade must increase at least at the rate of inflation.

One of the greatest effects on productivity is labor, according to Sidney Meadows, Flowerwood Nursery, AL. He said: "Because of the escalation in wages, there is a need in an escalation of output or we'll price ourselves out of the market. The labor costs are 25 to 35 percent of the sales dollar out of nursery stock."

Another important factor affecting labor relations is the performance standards, said Bill Studebaker, Studebaker Nursery, OH. "Performance standards improve employee morale and increase output. They also allow you to set piecework rates, if necessary, for even the various or less glamorous tasks."

John Flemer, Princeton Nurseries, Princeton, NJ, has combined years of study and experience on the problem. He said "compensation, communication, and concern" are the three main aspects in the management of workers, which is also an effective means to head-off

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unionization.

Rich Brolick, Zelenka Evergreen Nursery, Inc., Grand Haven, MI, spoke about problems with migrant labor. His company has spent over a million dollars in migrant facilities. "The key to the whole migrant program is the housing," said Brolick.

In addition to the sessions, John B. Wight, Jr., president and chairman of the board of Wight Nurseries, Inc., Cairo, GA, was elected president of AAN, replacing Hugh Steavenson, president of Forrest Keeling Nursery, Elsberry, MO.

The AAN inducted John J. Pinnery, Ottawa, KS, into the Nurserymen's Hall of Fame. It also presented two national awards to Harold Davidson, professor of horticulture at Michigan State University, for his nursery research contributions and effective teaching in horticulture.

To commemorate the convention, the AAN held a tree planting ceremony at the Nelson Gallery of Art and Atkins Museum in Kansas City.

#### LAWN CARE

### New officers elected for Lawn Institute

Norman Rothwell of N.M. Rothwell Seeds, Ontario, Canada, has been recently elected president of the Lawn Institute, and 18 new members have been elected to the Board of Trustees.

Other members serving with Rothwell will be Robert Peterson of E.F. Burlingham & Sons as vice president, and Robert Russell of J & L Adikes, Inc. as secretary-treasurer.

The Lawn Institute, sponsored by lawnseed breeders and growers, is a nationally recognized source of information concerning lawngrasses.

#### PROMOTIONS

### Toro promotes Adams to new position

The Toro Company recently promoted

James W. Adams to the new position of senior vice president, International Operations, joining Toro's six-member executive management committee.

Since starting with the company in 1974, Adams has been a group vice president of Toro's irrigation operations.

#### COMPANY

### International Harvester changes co. name

International Harvester, Payline Group, has altered its name to Construction Equipment Group.

The new name is expected to improve worldwide recognition of the International Harvester Co. products for which this group has manufacturing and marketing responsibilities.



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