

## LESCO Adds Chain of Stores on Top of Trucks in Florida

Jim Fitzgibbon and Bob Burkardt, two men who have shocked the distribution world more than once at LESCO, are set to do it again this month when they open the first two of a chain of wholesale stores in Boca Raton and Fort Lauderdale, FL.

"The goal is 20 or more stores in the South as soon as possible," boasts Scott Sincerbeau one of two regional managers for the new chain of stores. Heading up the new operation is Frank Kollath in the company's Rocky River, OH, headquarters.

"Each store will have inventories available for purchase and immediate pickup," Sincerbeau told *Weeds Trees & Turf* during the Lawn Care Show in Tampa in November. Everything keeps working as before, the trucks and phone order service, but the stores will reinforce sales and service in key cities where a little extra is needed." LESCO also has manufacturing facilities in Florida.

LESCO broke territorial limitations of distribution with its trucks in 1976. The trailer truck showrooms comb 20 states visiting golf courses, nurseries, and landscape maintenance companies. The person driving the truck is usually a college-educated agronomist capable of making recommendations and solving plant problems. "The truck showroom was really not our idea," says Fitzgibbon, "but we were the ones to make it successful."

The chain of wholesale outlets was not LESCO's idea either, a California company called Orion tried unsuccessfully to start a similar chain of stores two years ago. But Fitzgibbon and Burkardt seem to get inspired by trying where others fail. If the stores are as successful as the trucks have been, the professional landscape manager's supermarket has been born.

## Overseeding Is Growing Up

A drive through Scottsdale, AZ, is enough to convince any skeptic that overseeding has caught on big. We're not just talking about the plush golf courses. We are talking about parks and roadsides, resorts, condominium landscapes, and more and more single-family homes. The bright green perennial ryegrass is an impressive contrast to the dull grey and tan of dormant warm-season turf.

At the same time a bunch of golf course superintendents in Wisconsin, and a few in Canada, have learned the trick to keeping annual bluegrass off moist, clay fairways. By using growth regulators to stunt the poa, ryegrass and bent seed have time to get established and eventually pushing out the poa. Northrup King's ryegrass sales quadrupled this year says NK's Marc Grundman.

As the practice of overseeding to crowd out poa is discovered by more northern U.S. and Canadian superintendents, seed sales should take a big jump.

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