

SEED

Beware of 'rascals' when buying seed

"There isn't such a thing as a bargain in seed," says the president of a turf seed testing firm in Marysville, Ohio.

Dale Kern, of Seed Technology, Inc., warned participants in December's New Jersey Turfgrass Expo, "you get what you pay for."



Dale Kern

These warnings prefaced comments concerning the labeling of turf seed. That process, Kern explained, often involves the testing (under optimum germination conditions) of as little as one teaspoon's worth of seed per lot. The size of the lot could involve hundreds of pounds of seed.

There could be a wide variance in the quality and quantity of seed within a shipment of seed, he explained.

For instance, a pound of bluegrass

seed could contain as many as 1,100,000 or as few as 800,000 seed. The same is true of other species. And, even though the germination rate, as displayed on the label, could be the same for different bags of the same variety, the resulting seedlings might be as different in vigor as "pro football players and 85-year-old men."

Says Kern, even though some companies exceed the law ensuring the quality of their product, "there are some rascals in the industry."

Kern told the turfgrass professionals they will obtain better results with lower seeding rates of high quality seed than by higher



rates of inferior seed. He recommended commercial seed users insist on a 25-gram "all weed, all crop" check.

"They should say, 'I want to see everything that's in there.' There isn't a bargain basement in the seed industry," Kern said.

SURVEY

Lawn care operators would donate to public education

More than three-quarters of all lawn care operators would financially support a program to respond to public concerns about the use of chemicals, according to a survey conducted by Infometrics Research.

Of 120 total respondents, 91 said they would finance such a program.

As shown in the chart, most LCOs feel the chemical companies have responsibility for financing such programs; even though many also feel distributors, LCOs, and the Professional Lawn Care Association of

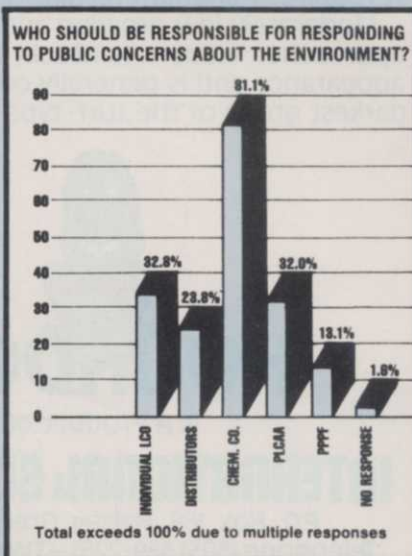
America have a responsibility.

In conjunction with these findings, 91.1 percent said they would distribute additional consumer literature, and 87.8 percent felt such literature should be designed to minimize the fear of chemicals.

A 94.3 percent majority felt that LCOs should unite nationwide to address chemical trespass legislation.

Asked if sign-posting on treated properties should become a voluntary but standard practice, 66.9 percent said "no."

A 74 percent majority felt all lawn care technicians should be certified.



PESTICIDES

Posting law passed in Maryland county

Homeowners and "green industry" workmen must post signs prior to applying pesticides in Prince George's County, just outside Washington, D.C.

Late last year the county council, by a 7-2 vote, passed the posting law.

The measure requires anyone (excluding farmers) who applies to pesticides to post a sign visible from the street. Failure to comply will result in a \$50 fine.

The council acted in spite of a ruling by Maryland Attorney General Stephen H. Sachs that local governments may not regulate the sale and use of pesticides. Those functions, he reported, are regulated by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act.

The law didn't generate undue enthusiasm from the county health department, where officials say enforcement may cost over \$100,000 a year.

Mike Tidd, owner of a Lawn Doctor franchise in nearby Glenn Dale, was one of just a few to openly speak against the issue prior to the vote.

"We didn't have an alliance in there fighting and punching," Tidd tells WEEDS TREES & TURF. "It's emotional stuff and the county council bought it hook, line and sinker."

Davey Tree donates truck and sprayer

Davey Tree, based in Kent, Ohio, has always had good luck hiring those who graduated from Hocking Technical College's tree care and timber harvesting program.

To show its appreciation, Davey recently donated a sprayer and truck to the Nelsonville, Ohio,-based technical school.

"Hocking has always turned out a high-quality trainee to the industry," says Davey area manager George Gaumer.

"We want to support their arboriculture program so they turn out an even higher-quality graduate," Gaumer tells WEEDS TREES & TURF.

Gaumer says the truck and sprayer will allow Hocking Tech to teach practical approaches to pest management and tree nutrition.

Hugh Morton, Hocking Tech director for forest industries training, tells WT&T that the truck is undergoing natural gas conversion and will run on either natural gas or gasoline.

Hocking Tech has its own natural gas wells in the rolling hills of southeastern Ohio.

The two-year, publicly-funded college offers 30 different areas of study to its 4,000 students. Almost a quarter of the students are in the natural resources department.

An associate degree of technical studies in tree care and timber harvesting includes an intensive 11-week program in tree care.



Hocking Technical College reps Hugh Morton (right), director of the Institute for Forest Industries Training, and arboriculture instructor Nelson Pierson (center) accept a truck and sprayer from Davey Tree vice-president/general manager/commercial services Don Shope.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Georgia firm will haul small waste quantities

Got some hazardous waste you want to get rid of?

You may want to call St. Joseph Motor Lines of Atlanta.

St. Joseph will haul any amount of hazardous waste to an EPA-approved disposal site, in accordance to recently-enacted RCRA (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) amendments regulating the Small Quantity Generator.



Eastwood

Eastwood, manager of St. Joseph's hazardous waste division.

"We're trying to dispel the fear that complying (with the RCRA amendments) will cost so much that the small quantity generator will be out of business," she says.

Under new EPA/RCRA rules, anyone generating more than 220 lbs. of hazardous waste per month must dis-

pose of the waste at an EPA-approved disposal site. The redefinition affects many lawn and landscape businesses.

St. Joseph charges by the 55-gallon drum. It prepares the proper manifests and label, and disposes drums.

"There's not a whole lot of choice out there," says Eastwood. Common carriers do not accept shipments of

hazardous waste and hazardous waste private carriers generally accept only by the truckload.

"This will become the accepted practice for the small quantity generator," she says.

For information, call Eastwood at (404) 452-1744 or write 5724 New Peachtree Rd., Atlanta, GA 30341.

SPORTS TURF

Dr. Kurtz applauds turf's 'new breed' in Ohio Turfgrass Show Speech

"We have a new breed of person coming along," says Dr. Kent Kurtz of the sports turf segment of the green industry. "It's no longer 'five yards and a cloud of dust'...but we may still be as much as 70 years behind the golf course superintendents."

Kurtz, speaking at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation conference, further noted that "the sports turf industry has never recovered from the 'wonder carpet.'" He did say, however, that some new developments

could help athletic field managers narrow the gap. Specifically:

- geotextiles, which affect better drainage and warm frozen turf;
- pre-germination tactics for quicker growth;
- turf colorants for dormant turf;
- improved turfseed varieties; and
- sod anchoring for new sod.

"The athletic segment of the industry is just starting to blossom," claims Kurtz, who is executive director of the Sports Turf Managers Association.

NFL bending injury data on fake turf?

An official of the National Football League Players Association says team owners are taking "an ostrich approach" to professional football player injuries.

The reason? The "cosmetics" of synthetic turf surfaces, says M.J. Duberstein, research director for the NFL Players Association. He termed

the NFL "a billion dollar a year entertainment industry."

Duberstein, who spoke at the New Jersey Turfgrass Expo in December, said: "artificial surfaces pose a major safety hazard for every NFL player."

He said the players association cemented its opposition to synthetic turf after comparing 1983 and '84 NFL injury figures from data supplied by league management. It showed an 18 percent increase in the number of injuries, Duberstein noted.

The Players Association spokesman attributed some of the increase to the move by the New York Jets and Indianapolis Colts from grass to artificial turf playing surfaces. The Colts injury rate doubled in '84 over '83. Leaguewide, the average number of injuries remained constant on grass, but went up 36 percent on synthetic, he said.



KEESTM Commercial Mowers The Heavy-Duty Workhorses.

Available in 32", 36", 48" and 60" models. 48" Model no. 48110H shown

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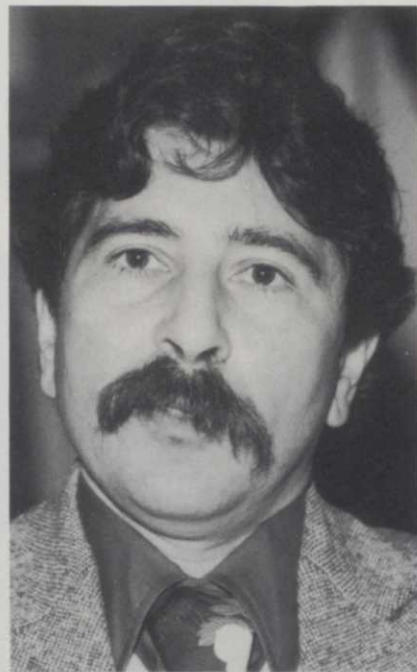
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M.J. Duberstein speaks in NJ

This past season figures supplied by management showed a 25 percent decrease in the injury rate, but Duberstein accused league management of "distorting the injury statistics."

The NFL Player's Association, the player's union, is attempting to limit the use of synthetic turf in professional football.

"How many more studies are needed?" Duberstein asked. "Artificial fields are as dangerous as always."

PESTICIDES

Prof: name change good for industry

Pesticides, why not call them "qualicides" or even "quanticides?"

Dr. William Becker, a veteran Florida agricultural safety specialist, posed this question at the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) Conference this past November.

Becker says the name itself, "pesticides," puts the Green Industry on the defensive.

"I sometimes wish the term

SHORTCUTS

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY.....This year marks two anniversaries for the Boy Scouts of America: 75th Diamond Jubilee and 55th year for its landscape architecture merit badge. Nearly 30,000 boys have earned the landscape architecture badge since its inception. Badge candidates—some as young as 11 years of age—must complete six requirements in areas like home grounds planning, topography, drainage, gardening, and plant study.

THE BIG TIME.....Trees were the subject of a recent news short in "Business Week" magazine. The brief article dealt with what homeowners should do to protect their property from possible damage by fallen trees and quoted Howard Eckel of The Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio. (Davey, incidentally, publishes a free "Guide to Tree Beauty and Tree Care" booklet.)

MOLE CRICKETS BEWARE.....Mole crickets have been added to the Florida SLN label of Orthene 75S soluble powder insecticide for use on residential and commercial turf and golf courses. The label recommends a late afternoon or early evening application, after irrigation.

TRAINING AIDS.....Three turf-related organizations have announced new training aids. The New York Turfgrass Association has three 35mm slide sets available—one each on insects, diseases and weeds of turf. Each is \$30 for members and \$45 for non-members. Write them at 210 Cartwright Blvd., Massapequa Park, NY, 11762. The Professional Lawn Care Association is offering slide/cassette training programs on weed control and turf diseases. For more information, call executive vice-president Jim Brooks at (404) 977-5222. And OMC Lincoln has an 18-minute video tape featuring Dr. Robert Shearman from the University of Nebraska. "The Living Carpet," describes common causes, symptoms and treatment of thatch and compaction. Copies are available through dealers or by calling (800) 228-4444.



Dr. Robert Shearman

FOR CHAIN SAW DEVOTEES.....One-year limited warranties are now being provided on all professional chain saws being manufactured by Beard-Poulan/Weed Eater. "We're the only manufacturer, domestic or foreign, who believes strongly enough in its professional chain saws to guarantee them for a full year," says product manager Walter Bennett. The company is the nation's largest manufacturer of chain saws.

ZOYSIA SPORTS TURF?.....Well-known research agronomist Jack Murray of the Beltsville (Md.) Agricultural Research Center has been doing a ton of research on slow-establishing zoysiagrass, a turf he feels has quite a future—as a sports turf. He says a zoysia-tall fescue blend (1-2 pounds tall fescue, to 1/2-1 pound zoysia) provides a good athletic turf. Murray also told the North Central Turfgrass Exposition audience that a synthetic zoysiagrass will be available in four to five years.

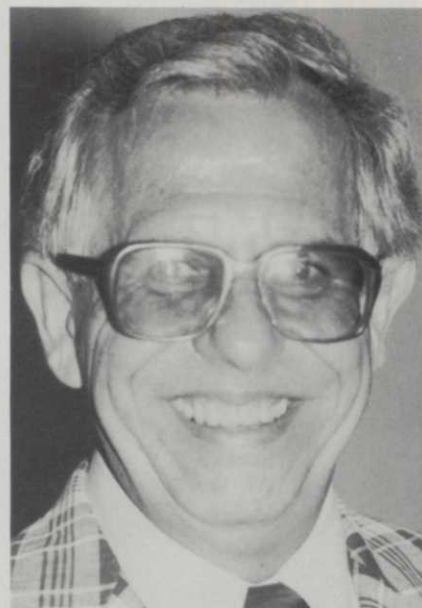
'pesticides' had never been coined," says Becker of the University of Florida. "Something like 'quanticides' and 'qualicides' would have been much more positive terms. Everyone wants quality products. And everyone wants these products in sufficient quantity to keep the price down."

Both, he insists, are by-products of the correct use of pesticides.

Semantics aside, Becker says pesticide users can be "their own worst enemies and fuel public concern that pesticides are bad."

His message: "We must put our house in order." And this for several specific reasons.

Credibility. The public perceives that pesticides are bad, that they contaminate our environment, poison



Dr. William Becker

our water and food supplies. Incidents like the contaminated watermelon scare in California this past summer damage credibility. Five pesticide-related deaths in Florida (two due to misuse, one to suicide, two in murder cases) attract national attention, he points out.

Also, the potential loss of pesticides for uses which they are now approved threatens green industry effectiveness. "We are losing nematocides in large quantities," Becker says. Meanwhile, manufacturers face higher costs of pesticide development, testing, approval, and marketing.

"The industry will continue to try to develop better pesticides where thousands of acres are going to be treated," Becker says. New products for smaller, specialized acreages are becoming increasingly scarce.

Becker warns, "there are enough

opportunities for pesticide problems and accidents" without the help of the green industry. "Too many of our competitors are cheating."

His advice: follow directions. They're on each pesticide label.

To prevent further restrictions on the use of pesticides, Becker outlines five steps.

● Use the right pesticide. Know your pest problem and know if a pesticide is needed. "Far too many pesticides are used because a problem 'may' develop. We fix far too many lawns which don't need fixing," he says.

● Storage. Give pesticides lock-and-key treatment. Only a few trusted employees should have access to them. Only reasonable quantities should be on hand. Inventory should be maintained. Storage should be fire proof, flood proof.

● Training. Becker emphasizes employees should be "trained, re-trained, certified, licensed, and tattooed and branded as qualified pesticide mixers, loaders, and applicators."

● Transport. The tailgate of a pickup truck is a dangerous place to transport a hazardous product. Can an eight-year-old boy get into pesticides

at a job site even after they've been safely delivered?

● Disposal. Pesticide users must join to lobby for and insist upon rational and reasonable solutions for the disposal of materials. Becker feels the improper disposal of chemicals is, perhaps, the public's greatest concern.

Says Becker: "Just as we have convinced our population that we cannot run our automobiles without gasoline, our homes without electricity, our daily lives without plastic, we must convince them that we cannot provide them with the quality and quantity of food and fiber—and attractive lawns—without pesticides."

—Ron Hall

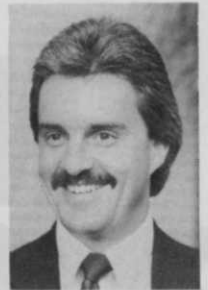
PEOPLE

HBJ promotes Kempner to associate publisher

Ron Kempner rises from national sales manager to associate publisher of WEEDS TREES & TURF. He has been with HBJ Publications for seven years. Jon Miducki joins WT&T as regional sales manager. Miducki was formerly regional sales manager for PEST CONTROL, another HBJ Publications



Kempner



Miducki

magazine.

The Professional Grounds Management Society says James B. Williamson completed the Grounds Manager Certification Program. Williamson is president of Colorado Clean, Inc., Colorado Springs, Colo., and is the 14th person to complete the program since it began April 1980.

Nice 'N' Green Plant Foods, Romeoville, Ill., gets a new salesman, Bret Rush, formerly with Ernie's Fertilizer Services, Walton, Ind. The Purdue grad operated a lawn care business before that.

The California Landscape Contractors Association tabs Roger D. Fiske as its 1986 president. Fiske has been a member of that organization since 1962.

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