

by the Editorial Staff

Slight rebound for commercial turf care

■ After a dismal 1986, members of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute are forecasting "a slight rebound" in 1987 for commercial turf care. The report shows a slow, steady growth in sales of walk-behind rotary mowers, riding rotary turf mowers and riding reel mowers. Landscape and lawn care is viewed as the fastest-growing segment of the market.

Sales of walk-behinds are forecast to be up to 80,800 units from 1986's 72,500. Riding rotaries should be at the 16,100-unit level after a 15,000 1986. And riding reels appear to be headed to the 4,200-unit mark.

The OPEI's extended forecast has walk-behinds at the 95,000 level, riding rotaries at 20,100 and riding reels at 5,400 by 1991.

'Variety Not Stated' means beware

■ The battle against the sale of generic seed continues. International Seeds of Halsey, Ore., has produced a flier entitled "'Variety Not Stated' Is Another Way of Saying 'Buyer Beware.'" The flier points out that, no matter what a seller tells you is in the bag, you don't know what you'll get. By purchasing a bag of seed labeled "Variety Not Stated," the buyer gives the seller the right to put any kind of seed in the bag—forage grass, whatever. And in most states it's legal. What can be done by the buyer for protection? Simple: buy properly labeled seed—the real thing.

Researcher produces test tube walnut tree

■ "Plantlets" of genetically superior walnut trees have been created in the test tubes of Susan Stefan at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Mo. The plantlets resemble seedlings but are rootless and a fraction of the size of normal seedlings.

Stefan grafts shoots from the plantlets onto walnut rootstocks, which are small seedlings that have had their tops removed. According to Stefan, it takes 10 days for the graft to become secure, and another week for the grafted shoot to grow to 25 times its size, or the normal seedling size, ready for planting.

Plantlets are created by taking tissue from the disease-free meristem tip region of a branch from the largest healthiest trees, then placing the tissue in an artificial growth medium containing nutrients and hormones. The result is a clone of a large, healthy walnut tree.

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