WASHINGTON — Though expansion wasn’t as great as it was in 1987, landscapers did meet their 1988 expectations and remain optimistic about increasing business in 1989, according to results of the 14th annual Landscape Business Survey by the National Landscape Association (NLA).

Work that accounted for the greatest sales increase in 1988 included residential renovation (+69%) and new commercial landscaping (+60%). This year, 84 percent of those polled said they expect new residential landscaping sales to increase, followed by residential renovation (+78%).

Last year NLA members predicted a 13.9 percent increase in business and enjoyed actual expansion of 13.7 percent. This year they are looking to grow by as much as 14.3 percent.

The table at right illustrates regional variations as well as over all averages from the NLA survey.

LAWN CARE

PLCAA says it will add to staff

MARIETTA, Ga. — The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) is moving ahead with plans to hire a communications specialist and a director of state government affairs. The goal is better relations between PLCAA, its members and state officials.

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Source: NLA
"We anticipate that with more activity in the area of issues management, we’re going to need someone to help us in terms of better communication with members and all kinds of allied groups," says Jim Brooks, executive vice president, regarding the communications specialist post.

The specialist will assist existing staff, particularly in the production of the association newsletter, and communication with member chapters on issues related matters.

Brooks said the state affairs position was created so that PLCAA can have someone to focus on regulatory matters. The director will monitor state legislative and regulatory activities relative to the lawn care industry and recommend and coordinate PLCAA’s response to those activities.

Brooks said the state affairs director job would most likely be filled first. The communications specialist position should be filled by June.

TURFGRASS

U of C releases zoysiagrass research

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — The new zoysiagrasses are a truly minimum maintenance turf variety that grows best when planted by stolon. In addition, its slow root regrowth is a bigger problem than phytotoxicity following pre-emergence herbicide application, according to researchers at the University of California here.

Results from a preliminary study of nitrogen fertilization of the new zoysiagrass El Toro tend to confirm its potential as a minimum maintenance turfgrass.

"When unfertilized or fertilized at a low level, the El Toro zoysiagrass produced a sward of poor color but one of adequate density and fairly pleasing appearance," reports Vic Gibeault, Ph.D., cooperative extension environmental horticulturist. Minimum maintenance turf of decent density and appearance resulted with low nitrogen applications, he added, while moderate to high nitrogen treatments resulted in a sward of deep green color, high density and overall turf quality.

"If S.B. 1226 is vigorously enforced, it could affect the operations of herbicide applicators. According to Ford, 40 percent of all herbicides brought into California are used by public agencies.

NAWASD

New law: trouble in California

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The legislative juggernaut continues to roll in California. The latest episode in the state’s ongoing efforts is S.B. 2126, which states that after January 1, 1990, no public agency may apply an herbicide or pesticide without written recommendation by a licensed “pest control advisor.” Public agencies are any facilities funded by taxpayers.

According to John Ford of Contra Costa County, agencies have one year to “grandfather in” the bill’s requirements. That means certain educational requirements will be waived for those who have been advising for the past few years.

Stan Strew, executive director of the California Agricultural Producers Association (CAPA), said advisor applicants must have a high school diploma and at least two years practical experience within the individual agency. CAPA sponsored the bill, which is predicated on the fact that public agencies are up front in the public eye, particularly those in the highway department. According to Strew, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) recently went through numerous lawsuits brought on by improper, non-supervised applications.

SOD

Sod companies get wise to market

SAN DIEGO — Many of the secrets to success in the sod business are based on close attention to basic market indicators and the size of the bottom line.

Companies have become more careful than ever in the attention they pay to housing starts, interest rates and size of inventory.

"We as an industry have become more cautious due to the ups and downs," says Jim Huggett of Long Island Farm, Marshall, Wis.

"You know you’re in a downturn," says Huggett, "when you look out the window day after day and see that you’re doing the same amount of mowing, and you realize your bottom line is stagnant. It almost catches you by surprise."

Huggett and other sod producers believe strongly in the interest rate as an accurate prophet, due to its affect on housing starts.

"We as producers can and should do our homework, says Huggett. Get in contact with customers, builders, and read the Dodge reports.

Larry Smilsky of Cookstown, Ontario, Canada, held off on certain land lease renewals during a recent slowdown to be on the safe side, and also engaged in some "general belt tightening."

When it comes to expansions or sudden upswings in business, Smilsky acts strictly by demand, and is careful not to forget his most loyal customers in the heat of battle.

"Over the short term it’s better, of course, to have extremely high demand," he admits. "But over the long term, your (oldest) customers expect you to be there to take care of them."

A second study conducted in Irvine by J. Michael Henry shows stolon planting to be the best way and mid-June the best time for planting and establishing El Toro in Southern California.

Grasses planted with stolons established much faster with summer and spring planting times than those grasses planted by the plug method, according to Henry. There was little difference in establishment between the two planting methods for grasses planted in the fall.

continued on page 14
A third study, also conducted at the university's Riverside facility, showed that sod producers need to be more concerned about slow root regrowth than phytotoxicity when applying some commonly-used pre-emergence herbicides between harvests to El Toro zoysiagrass swards.

David W. Cudney, Cooperative Extension Weed scientist here, reported that only atrazine treatments showed a color reduction. Oxadiazon and atrazine treatments didn't significantly reduce root length. Benefin, at its lower application rate of 3 lbs. Al/acre, resulted in slight reduction in root length. The high rate of benefin and both rates of bensulide, pendimethalin and prodiamine reduced root length, as did combination treatments of benefin plus trifluralin, benefin plus oryzalin and benefin plus oxadiazon.

**DISTRIBUTORS**

**Dealer says industry faces important issues**

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE,** Ohio — The green industry has some important issues to face in the coming years, according to Larry Munn.

"Things are changing," says Munn, who is celebrating his 30th year as an equipment dealer. "I understand the grass clippings are causing problems with the EPA. So manufacturers are scrambling to deal with this problem as far as innovative equipment goes."

Some companies, like Excel Industries, have equipment that automatically mulches the clippings.

In parts of the country, laws exist to outlaw people from collecting and then dumping grass clippings because of possible pesticide contamination.

"Mulching grass is not new," continues Munn. Munn, originally an agronomist...

**KEEPING IN TOUCH...**Dick Bare, president of Arbor-Nomics, Inc., of Norcross, Ga., sends newsletters to all of his commercial and residential clients. "The Turfette" is for turf customers. "The Buggette" goes to tree and shrub customers. The letters are sent five times a year and contain topics such as lawn care, disease control and water conservation. "The newsletters have helped us build up the company," says Bare. "I try to write them like a friendly letter." Bare has learned the importance of image, and he wants to let his customer know that he's friendly, concerned, and easy to talk to.

**HOUSING STEADY...**The short term outlook for housing starts is pretty good, according to Gopal Ahluwalia, a Washington, D.C. housing analyst. Ahluwalia forecasts 1.39 million new homes to be built in 1989, down slightly from the 1988 figure of 1.49 million. Looking further ahead, he predicts 1.5 million new homes for 1990, and 1.6 million for both 1991 and 1992. Changing demographics will cause a slowdown in 1993. The ideal home size has also grown considerably. According to Ahluwalia, 1,200 sq. ft. was ideal 25 years ago. Today, homeowners want 1,800 to 2,000 sq. ft. Of course, paying for it is another story.

**KEEP THEM SINGLE...**Marriage can wreak havok with your employee health coverage. Speaking from his experience as an employer, Tim Doppel, president of Atwood Lawn Spray, Sterling Heights, Mich., says medical coverage for a single male costs $800 per year. But as soon as that worker ties the knot (and what self-respecting boss wouldn't include the wife in the health plan?) the cost soars to $3000.

**ONE NAME, NEW OFFICE...**Arizona-based Environmental Earthscapes/The Groundskeeper has grouped both companies under the name 'The Groundskeeper.' According to president Jack Hasbrouck, Jr. Recent "changes in the market demand for our services combined with increased regulation of our industry has caused us to re-evaluate our prior decision of maintaining separate divisional names." Hasbrouck said he was licensed to apply pesticides only under The Groundskeeper name, "and if I did a landscape construction under the Environmental Earthscapes name, I'd have to have The Groundskeeper subcontract to my own company." The Groundskeeper recently opened a new facility in Tucson.

**SHORT CUTS**

**COMMAND PERFORMANCE.**

**Innovation**

Competition out there is tough. But you can always count on Ditch Witch equipment to help you keep one step ahead of the other guy. Take the 255sx for instance. It can help you bury sprinkler pipe without trenching and with minimal turf damage. In fact, no other lawn plow can outperform it. Now that's innovation!

**Ditch Witch**


Circle No. 118 on Reader Inquiry Card

14 LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT/APRIL 1989
When the recession hit, we
industry for one reason.

"The only thing that affects its
cyclical nature of business.
The grass is not affected by the
85 percent of his sales.

Munn: Grass clippings will
be a problem.

LANDSCAPING
Developers going
full service
LONG GROVE, Ill. — Land-
scaping will continue to
have a high priority among
leading developers and
property managers, says
Mark Hunner of The Brick-
man Group Ltd.

"With competition on
the increase, developers
understand that they must
use every available re-
source, including high-
quality professional land-
scraping, to develop their
properties cost-effectively
and to give them the com-
petitive edge in attracting
and keeping the best-qual-
ified tenants or buyers," Hunner notes.

"Reflecting the growing
use of full-service business
consultants and suppliers,
we foresee an increase in
demand for full-service
landscape management
companies to creatively
meet the landscape design,
contracting and main-
tenance needs of developers and
property managers."

The reason why? Ac-
cording to Hunner,
whether a consequence of
the last recession, the after-
math of 1987's stock market
crash or the rise in mergers
and acquisitions—com-
panies have streamlined
and no longer have in-
house landscape staffs.

"And when one com-
pany is responsible for an
entire project," concludes
Hunner, "it often can build
in efficiencies that reduce
the total cost of services
copyrighted.

LITERATURE

Association data
base now on line
WASHINGTON, D.C. —
Barring any serious snags,
American Association of
Nurserymen members
have, by April, access to a
data base full of legislative
information and the names
of industry contacts.

Information in the data
bank is based on member
responses to surveys re-
questing the names of
known state personnel cur-
rently involved in water
availability and manage-
ment, groundwater issues,
and data on current or pend-
ing legislation in those
areas.

"Some of the people
will be affiliated with state gov-
ernments, horticulture ex-
tension agencies or univer-
sities," says Brian Corsini,
director of grower services
for the association.

The data base is free to
members as part of the
Water Management Com-
mittee's work for the
association.

Corsini said he is also
working on putting the in-
formation into a comput-
erized bulletin board
format which allows other
modern-equipped com-
puter operators to call and
access a specific menu con-
taining congressional up-
dates and other pertinent
information.

GOLF

New GCSAA prez
sets priorities
AURO R, Colo. — As the
new president of the Golf
Course Superintendents
Association, Dennis Lyon
plans to keep the GCSAA
strong and successful, with
concentration on the is-

VERSATILITY
Looks can be deceiving. What really matters is
what's on the inside, and how it will make your
job easier. That's the thinking behind the 2020
riding trencher. Not only can you use it to backfill,
but it's less than 36
inches wide, so it will dig
just about anywhere you
need it to. And isn't that
the beauty of versatility?
Come take a closer look.
One-Pass Mowing & Clean-Up

Mow and power vac at the same time with Goossen’s new 128 cu. ft. capacity Vac ‘n’ Load. It can be used with virtually any front deck or mid-mount mower, and is also ideal for fast fall leaf pickup. And when the job’s done, it tilts up for easy dumping.

If you need time-saving one-pass capability, then you need to know more about Vac ‘n’ Load. It gets the big jobs done faster.

Call toll-free 1-800-228-6542
(In Nebraska: 402-228-4226)

Goossen INDUSTRIES
P.O. Box 705 • Beatrice, Nebraska 68310

Golf

Use soil tests for best care

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Soil test reports are gaining in stature as another step towards improved golf course maintenance, according to Tom Turner, Ph.D., University of Maryland.

The prime motivator in soil testing should be to prevent nutrient deficiencies in turf. Less frequently, the soil test is helpful in diagnosing degrees of toxicity.

Turner believes checks for nutrient imbalance will soon be more common. “Especially with these high sand content putting greens, the potential for micro-nutrient problems increases.”

“One thing that you want to use soil tests for is monitoring your fertility program,” says Turner. “If you’ve been in a deficiency situation, test periodically to see how quickly you can start correcting it.”

Factors to consider in making phosphorus and potassium recommendations are soil level and soil condition. Sand and clay, for example, each have different nutrient requirements and compaction considerations.

Chemicals

Preparation is best protection

DOVER, Ohio — A consulting and design engineering firm has been formed here to help the green industry develop safe and efficient systems for the storage, mixing and handling of chemicals.

Haskett/McCausland & Associates is designed to provide protection from spillage and leakage, significantly reduce or eliminate storage and disposal of chemical waste products, and increase speed and safety in loading and handling operations, as well as other chemical-related services.

The firm is at 425 W. Howe St., P.O. Box 337, Dover, Ohio 44622; (216) 364-1442.

Survival of the Fittest.

Dependability

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Jacklin expands into southwest

POST FALLS, Ida. — The Jacklin Seed Company has established a southwest office in Phoenix, Arizona and a research station in the Yuma and Imperial Valley areas.

Research at the Arizona facilities will be focused on warm-season grasses, particularly the improved and newly released Bermudagrasses and zoysiagrasses. Plans include doubling the Ari-
Just like a small sod cutter, the Blade does not spin, the oscillating motion does not throw debris. Self-propelled and push models available. Rugged design for commercial use.

Optional Blades:
- Disc Blade for cutting straight edge along sidewalks and driveways.
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- "V" Blade for removing a strip of turf along a sidewalk.

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TURFCO

Shatter aerate or hollow tines?
The biggest aeration controversy involves the comparative effectiveness of hollow tine coring vs. solid, or shatter-coring.

Instead of removing a core of soil, the solid tine pushes it further down. The general consensus is that solid tine coring is not very effective, and might do more harm than good.

"Whenever you drive a solid tine into the ground, you're displacing a good deal of soil," says Doug Chapman of Dow Gardens, "and there may be a potential for damage, or further compaction. Basically, there's evidence that drier soil, or greens with high sand content, benefit most from shattering effects."

Robert Morris says a general feeling exists among supers that shatter-core aeration doesn't create enough disturbance within the turf to make it worthwhile.

Jerry Faubel, superintendent at Saginaw (Mich.) Country Club, prefers hollow tine coring.

"It benefits the soil in two ways: core removal helps the soil internally, and the cores left on the surface work well toward thatch control."

Faubel says solid tine coring is very difficult to use for several reasons. "Soil moisture conditions must be very specific. If the soil is too moist you lose the shattering effect. Second, the solid tine has the tendency to lift the surface. When you punch something in there, the space has to go somewhere. You either destroy air space or lift the soil."

"As far as greens are concerned," continues Faubel, "we might aerate occasionally. We're on a sand top dressing program, so we don't need to aerate the greens annually."
for the Landscaper

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case an employee causes an

accident. Depending on the

company's experience

days, paid vacations, training
days and medical and
dental coverage all add up.

LAWN CARE

LCOs growing for several reasons

NEW ORLEANS — Increased customer demand
and a strong desire for
greater profits were the
main reasons lawn care op-
erators (LCOs) expanded
their services in 1988, ac-
cording to a Dow Chemical
Company survey.

Ninety-nine percent of
LCOs polled said they now
offer services beyond tradit-
ional lawn care, while 88
percent said they've seen
an increase in customer de-
mand for different services
in the past year.

Additional services most
frequently offered are tree/
shrub fertilization and in-
sect spraying (64 percent),
mowing and lawn renova-
tion (59 percent) and land-
scape planning (41 percent).

Forty percent of LCOs said
their customer base turns
over 5 to 10 percent a year, 28
percent reported a 15 to 20
percent loss and 25 percent
said they lose 15 to 20 percent
of their customers annually.

PLCAA suggests various
tactics that could reduce cus-
tomer attrition, including
better customer communica-
tion and education, better
and more service, improved
weed control and enhanced
employee training.

The LCOs were polled at
Dow's booth at the PLCAA
meeting in New Orleans.

PLCAA

$10,000 donated
for NY court fight

MARIETTA, GA — The Profes-
sional Lawn Care Associa-
tion of America has given
$10,000 to the New York Pesticide Coalition war chest.
The money is to help the
Coalition in its ongoing court
battle against New York state
pesticide regulations.

"PLCAA is ready to
challenge unreasonable
regulation and legislation
on a case-by-case basis and
to put both dollars and peo-
ple behind that fight," says
PLCAA president, Robert
F. Parmley.

PLCAA believes the New
York lawsuit represents a
significant step in the strug-
gle for reasonable regulation
of the use of pesticides, both
for lawn care services and
the entire green industry. A
1987 law enacted by New
York state, plus further reg-
ulations enacted by the New
York Department of Envi-
ronmental Conservation, re-
quire customer contracts,
prenotification and posting
when pesticides are applied.

PLCAA, the Coalition and
other national trade associa-
tions feel the regulations and
the law are unreasonable,
overly broad and unjustified,
given the pesticide safety
data available.

PLCAA reports it has
dedicated nearly a third of
its 1989 operating budget to
issues management, which
covers legal activity, per-
sonnel, and a variety of
public relations and coalit-
ion-building activities.

"Our mission is clear," said
Parmley. "We have put a
high priority on issues
management."