

INDUSTRY

Future Farmers to emphasize turf

BLACKSBURG, Va. — The Future Farmers of America (F.F.A.) is planning to alter its annual contest for high school students to place more emphasis on the turf/landscape market by 1991.

"We have had insufficient emphasis in the turf area," notes Dr. Alan R. McDaniel of Virginia Tech, the man in charge of the contest re-evaluation. "Today, agriculture is not your traditional crop and animal production. Only one person in six in the agriculture industry is directly related to food production."

McDaniel says that the new emphasis on turf-related studies will definitely have an impact on the industry in the future. "It represents an introduction to horticulture, landscaping and turf at the high school level," he says.

Helping McDaniel restructure the F.F.A. contest is assistant Frank B. Flanders of the University of Georgia. Also on the advisory board are Bob Brophy of Cushman; Richard Anderson and Ron Lytle of Kubota; Thomas Carter of Jacobsen; Andy Seckinger of Chipco Specialty Products; and Brian Corsini, Carl Meyer and Andy Klapis of the American Association of Nurserymen and the Wholesale Nursery Growers Association.

"The F.F.A. has noted a tremendous decline in students who want to study strictly agriculture," says Brophy. "Most of the emphasis is now in urban horticultural areas. We gave them parameters of what the industry is looking for." □

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The test consisted of placing tractors on a 15° slope with a 175 lb. rider, grass catcher in place with 25 lb. weights in each bag. The engines were set at full throttle with the gear shift lever in the highest gear. The clutch was released quickly to determine the extent of front wheel lift-off. Four of the machines experienced "extreme" front wheel lift-off.

"To get the exact scenario," explains Liskey, "you have to make an awful lot of assumptions. That people stop on 15° slopes, with a loaded bag, run the engine at full throttle and pop the clutch. It would have been nice if they had talked to the industry a little bit more prior to discussion of some of the points relative to safety recommendations."

Liskey said the institute would be responding to the report. □

MARKETING

Survey explores buying habits

OAKLAND, Calif. — Most California gardeners spend between \$50 and \$299 a year on garden supplies and plant material, according to the University of California Cooperative Extension.

The UCCE recently conducted a survey to determine the buying habits of home gardeners around the state.

The survey results show that gardeners who shop at full service garden centers spend the most money. Almost 54 percent of these shoppers spend \$150 or more in an average year, while only 37.5 percent of those who shop at other businesses for their supplies spend that much.

The decorative value of gardening was ranked as the most important reason to garden. □

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