

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

ASSOCIATIONS

Green industry's shakers team up for new coalition

CHICAGO — To insure that their collective voice will be heard, nine green industry trade associations teamed up here Feb. 22-23. Ed Davis, president of the American Sod Producers Association (ASPA), served as acting chairman.

Task forces were established to determine the organizational framework and a potential name. Other interim projects approved were:

- evaluation of an industry-wide economic survey;
- developing an improved information exchange on legislative and regulatory matters;
- coordination of programs directed to environmental improvement and overall public perceptions and policies.

"This had been attempted a couple years ago, but very little was accomplished," notes Doug Fender, executive director of the ASPA. "Last time we all saw each other, five or six of us said, 'let's try it again but this time let's focus it.'

"The result was an extremely positive meeting. We all feel that a proper path to the future has been set."

The group also agreed to begin an inventory of exist-

ing educational programs and to exchange future meeting dates. To improve communications, the groups also agreed to extend special annual meeting invitations to the leaders of the other groups and consider providing complimentary exhibit

booth spaces.

"Each of the nine organizations volunteered to take on some aspects of the future of this group," says Fender.

Other associations present: American Society of Landscape Architects, Associated Landscape Con-

tractors of America, International Society of Arboriculture, Irrigation Association, National Arborist Association, Professional Grounds Management Society, Professional Lawn Care Association of America and The Lawn Institute. □



Green industry summit participants who met in Chicago recently: (Seated, from left) Ron Kujawa, ALCA; Robert Skiera, ISA; Bob Felix, NAA; Brian Kubota, ASLA; Russell Studebaker, PGMS; (Standing, from left) David Bohardt, ASLA; William Kruidenier, ISA; R.C. Sears, IA; Randy Tischer, ASPA; Jeff Bourne, PGMS; Terry Peters, ALCA; Jim Brooks, PLCAA; Bob Parmley, PLCAA; Ed Davis, ASPA; Doug Fender, ASPA; Dr. Eliot Roberts, LI; Dick Hunder, IA; and Frank Harder, NAA.

Next month:

- Cool-season disease control by Dr. Bill Shane of Ohio State University
- Warm-season disease control by Dr. Don Blasingame of North Carolina

Ohio State profs observe drought

KENT, Ohio — "We are going to be selling fertilization as an aid to recover from the drought," says Richard Rathgens of Davey Tree Co. "Our clients are receptive."

Rathgens was addressing a group of green industry experts at a "drought seminar" held at Davey Tree here this spring.

Rathgens also noted that Davey Tree lost about \$500,000 to the drought last year. "People cancelled fertilization, wanting to wait and see what happened," he noted. "Many of the lawns did recover. We did a lot of seeding last fall and many customers are requesting it this spring."

Because of the overly dry conditions, many diseases showed up in lawns, Dr. Chuck Powell of Ohio State University observed.

"We saw a lot of unusual turf diseases. I think it was because the grass was pre-disposed to diseases. Are they still pre-disposed this spring? It'll be interesting to see."

Powell noted that red thread "was showing up in

SEED

Oregon groups promote burning

SILVERTON, Ore. — In one corner of the green industry is the fight over water regulations. In another brews the battle over field burning.

The Oregon Women for Agriculture issued thousands of brochures in March explaining the benefits of field burning in an attempt to snuff out efforts by some to ban the practice.

"Our organization exists for educational purposes," says Caroline Simmons. "We felt we had to make some noise."

The fervor of anti-burn activists was ignited by an August, 1988 traffic accident in which seven people were killed. Drifting smoke

continued on page 14

Panelists at Davey Tree discuss the drought (left to right): Drs. John Street, Bill Pound and Chuck Powell of Ohio State University; Richard Rathgens of Davey Tree; Dr. Elton Smith, also of OSU.



95°F weather" and that "fungus diseases went wild."

Dr. John Street of Ohio State also had some interesting observations.

"One thing we quickly realized," he said, "is that the public connotes brown with dead. But when city officials learned the term 'dormant,' they went too far the other way and used it as a panacea."

Street said that Kentucky bluegrass in unirrigated areas experienced a 20 to 30 percent death rate. Kentucky-31 tall fescue did not go dormant at all "and came back extremely well." Fine fescues experienced the greatest failure rate. "Lawns with more thatch were the ones that were extensively damaged," Street said.

The sessions were chaired by Jim Chatfield, county extension agent for Akron and vicinity. Also serving on the panel were Dr. Bill Pound and Dr. Elton Smith. □

GOLF

Prolific golf writer Herb Graffis passes away at 95

FT. MYERS BEACH, Fla. — Herb Graffis, one of the golf industry's staunchest supporters, passed away here February 12.

Graffis and his brother Joe, who died in 1979, co-founded *Golfdom* magazine in 1927. *Golfdom* magazine eventually became *Golf Business*, which was folded

TURF

Drought tolerance reviewed

PLAINVIEW, N.Y. — To best prepare for drought conditions, why not install the best drought-tolerant grass? No reason not to, says Maria Cinque of the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County.

As strict water conservation becomes an industry standard, Cinque says it will be much easier to reduce lawn water by selecting varieties like:

- Tall fescues, which are the most drought tolerant, according to Cinque. They also can grow on a wide range of soils with less than normal amounts of fertilizer.

- Fine fescues, which are drought and shade tolerant, and prefer not to be over-watered or over-fertilized. Cinque suggests using them in combination with Kentucky bluegrass or perennial ryegrass.

- Perennial ryegrasses, which are quick germinators, are wear tolerant and grow fairly well in light to moderate shade.

- New varieties of Kentucky bluegrass combine good looks with reduced maintenance.

- Zoysiagrass, which can provide a thick, cushiony turf. It withstands high temperatures, grows well on poorer soil and can be mowed closer than most northern cool-season grasses. □



Cinque

into the old *Weeds Trees & Turf*, in 1977. Two years ago, WT&T became *Landscape Management*.

The elder Graffis (he was 95 years old at the time of his death) was a prolific golf writer, helping organize the Golf Writers Association of America. In 1975, Graffis wrote "The PGA," the of-

ficial history of the organization.

He also had a hand in helping organize what is now the National Golf Foundation.

Graffis was born in Indiana, but attended Northwestern University and spent much of his life in the Chicago area. □

SHORT CUTS

TURFGRASS PLUGS...Milt Engelke, Ph.D. at Texas A&M University, recently got a chance to plug the turfgrass industry when he was interviewed by The Associated Press. Engelke told the AP that last summer's drought "was like a Sunday school picnic. It's going to get a lot worse." He also told the reporter that the Texas A&M lab keeps artificial turf around "to clean our shoes."

A COLORFUL ADDITION...Multi-colored cotton lint plants are available from the Southern Crops Laboratory in College Station, Texas. **A. Edward Percival**, geneticist, has cotton lint plants in green, many shades of brown, khaki and chocolate. **Shull Vance**, golf course superintendent at The Country Club of Mobile, has planted many varieties of the ornamental and brown lint cotton. Vance wrote to us to say he planted them "in containers for display, in a planter next to one of the club's swimming pools, and a few rows back of the No. 14 tee." To obtain the cotton seeds, write to the Crop Germplasm Research Unit, P.O. Drawer N, College Station, Texas 77841.

A WEALTH OF TREES...Ever consider how much value a tree adds to the landscape? The United States Forest Service has the answer. According to the USFA, trees can contribute an average of seven percent to the value of a half-acre home site and as much as 27 percent of the appraised value of the property.

NEW ENTERPRISE...Robert Scobee, former market development and sales manager for The Andersons' Lawn Products Division, has formed New Trends Marketing, a product sales/development venture to assist turf care product manufacturers penetrate lawn and garden markets. For more information, call Scobee at (419) 874-4019 in Perrysburg, Ohio.

R_x FOR A LEGEND...The "Lover's Oak" in Brunswick, Ga. is 900 years old, according to legend. When members of the American Society of Consulting Arborists visited it, they determined that a general lack of maintenance had resulted in serious decay and hazardous liability potential. ASCA executive director **Jack Siebenthaler**, one of the visitors, offered the organization's assistance at no charge to the city. They will recommend possible courses of action for providing a longer and more useful life for the tree so that future generations can enjoy it in complete safety. Using the latest scientific methods, they also hope to determine the tree's actual age.

BURNING from page 11

across Oregon's Interstate 5 obscured drivers' vision, resulting in a multi-vehicle pile-up.

Seed producers are allowed to burn 200,000 acres this season—on days when conditions are right—an amount Clarence Simmons is happy with, but neither he nor other producers look forward to an outright ban. "Our fescues have to be burned, there's just no way out," insists Simmons, who operates Clarence Simmons Farms, Inc.

Two bills are under consideration by the Oregon legislature. A bill sponsored by Ron Cease seeks a three-year phase-down of burning. Sen. Grattan Kearns's bill would require an immediate ban.

The Oregon Seed Council says a three-year phase-down does not give producers enough time to determine the yields produced by alternatives to burning. □

LAWN CARE

ChemLawn after biopesticides

COLUMBUS, OH — ChemLawn Services Corp. is looking toward Ecogen, a small Pennsylvania company for strains of insecticidal bacteria from which it will develop biopesticides, a cheaper, more effective method of pest control in lawns and ornamental plants.

Under the agreement, ChemLawn will formulate the product from the strains and perform field trials. Exactly what pests will be targeted or when the product is to be released has not yet been determined, according to ChemLawn spokesperson Deb Strohmeier.

Ecogen has as many as 7,000 strains of bacteria, called Bt, for *Bacillus thuringiensis*. These bacterial proteins kill insects upon ingestion.

There are a few Bt-based products for homeowners already on the market.

According to a *Wall Street Journal* report, the in-

creased sensitivity of homeowners to chemicals has led ChemLawn to look for alternatives to battling pests traditionally controlled with chemicals. □

INSECTS

New product fights deer tick

BOSTON — EcoHealth, Inc. says its new product, Damminix, has proven to be more than 97 percent effective in reducing the number of Lyme disease-infected deer ticks on treated property. The product could be a major weapon in the battle against Lyme disease, which is carried by the deer tick.

According to EcoHealth, the findings were based on tests conducted in 1988 by the Connecticut Parks Department, the Nature Conservancy on Shelter Island, the Trustees of Reservation in Ipswich, Mass., and the New York State departments of Health and Parks and Recreation.

"These tests show that Damminix can play a major role in controlling this serious public health problem," says Alexander Kovel, president of Boston-based EcoHealth.

Developed by three scientists from Harvard's School of Public Health, Damminix works by focussing on the tick, *Ixodes dammini*, which carries the disease. Although adult ticks feed on deer, the immature ticks feed on the white-footed mouse, which carries the disease.

Damminix consists of biodegradable cardboard tubes filled with cotton balls soaked in permethrin, a mild insecticide. The tubes are placed in a grid pattern in the affected area in the spring and late summer. Mice then gather the cotton balls and bring them back to their nests where the treated cotton kills the ticks without harming the mice.

Damminix is registered with the EPA and in 12

states where Lyme disease has been detected. □

ASSOCIATIONS

Cleaning up groundwater

CLEVELAND — "If we don't take an active role in finding answers to the groundwater questions, somebody is going to do it for us."

Those words, spoken by John Thorne of Dupont, signal the formation of the Alliance for a Clean Rural Environment (A.C.R.E.).

A.C.R.E. is an educational effort being undertaken by 20 primary producers of agricultural pesticides, including ones used on trees and turf. Those 20 companies produce 90 percent of the pesticides used in the United States.

The major objective of A.C.R.E., a non-profit organization, is to help protect ground and surface water

quality. A.C.R.E. members will receive 12 fact sheets per year and a quarterly newsletter. The organization will promote a Speaker's Bureau and a Speaker's Bank. It will hold roundtables in Ohio, North Carolina, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas and two more agriculturally-oriented states. It will provide print and broadcast "public service announcements" to members.

Most information will deal with good management practices when handling, applying, storing and disposing of crop protection chemicals.

In a visit to LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT magazine, A.C.R.E. executive director Patrick Haggerty acknowledged the fact that the green industry is indeed an important member of the agricultural community because of its high visibility among urban and suburban homeowners.

Membership in A.C.R.E.

is free of charge, as it is completely supported by the chemical companies. To become a member of A.C.R.E., call (800) 545-5410. □

TREES

Global Releaf will cool planet

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Global Releaf, a national tree-planting campaign by the American Forestry Association (AFA), is aimed at reducing high temperatures associated with the "greenhouse effect." The program's goal is to get people to plant 100 million trees in communities by 1992.

"Present global temperatures are the highest since records have been kept," says Dr. Michael J. Walterscheid, forestry specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. "Trees planted around homes and in communities

would break up 'heat islands' by shading buildings and concrete."

Tropical zones are losing forests to agricultural conversion at an estimated rate of 28 million acres per year, and urban expansion replaces trees with acres of concrete every day. If present trends continue, scientists estimate the level of atmospheric carbon dioxide (which creates the "greenhouse effect") will double, raising U.S. temperatures 6 to 12°F in a few decades.

The 100 million new trees could offset America's carbon dioxide emissions by 18 million tons a year and at the same time save American consumers \$4 billion annually in energy costs, according to AFA estimates.

"Three well-placed trees around a house can cut home air conditioning energy needs by 10 to 50 percent," Walterscheid notes.

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forests could offset up to one-third of the current carbon dioxide produced by burning fossil fuel, he adds. □

MANAGEMENT

Water audits to boom in the 90s

LONG BEACH, Calif. — As water regulations tighten over the next decade, water auditing will become a major business opportunity for landscape contractors.

Walt Jackson, specification manager for Irritrol Company, says a one-day program is already in full swing in California to supply contractors with the necessary auditing skills. Contractors may then offer proposals to public or private agencies to improve irrigation systems performance. "In most cases," says Jackson, "you can improve water use by 30 to 40 percent."

Contractors should con-

sider jumping on this bandwagon. Jackson believes the next couple of years will bring even stricter mandates limiting water use, and, as he reluctantly admits, "you can't count on the homeowner to monitor and use equipment correctly."

Prerequisite skills for entering water auditing include experience in writing proposals or bidding, project planning and management and basic computer knowledge.

The one-day course costs \$50. For more information, contact Marsha Prillwitz at the California Department of Water Resources, 1416 9th St., P.O. Box 942836, Sacramento, Calif. 94236-0001. □

Correction

There was an error in the "Herbicide Combinations" chart on page 50 of the March issue.

The chart listed "Rout" as

being a combination of bromacil plus diuron, which is incorrect. That herbicide has been out of production for several years. It is no longer marketed by Hopkins Chemical.

A new "Rout" is now marketed by Sierra Chemical. It is a combination of Goal and Surflan herbicides that is used on ornamentals only. It is specifically labelled "not for use on turf." □

GOLF

Chemical woes are on the rise

Eighty-three percent of the people surveyed at the annual meeting of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) believe that chemical application regulations in their states are becoming more restrictive.

The poll, sponsored by Sandoz Crop Protection Corp., also revealed that 39

percent of superintendents have heard golfers express "very little or no concern" about the chemicals they apply, while 45 percent have heard "moderate concern."

When asked if they had changed their chemical application policies or procedures to enhance safety, many superintendents indicated that they had taken several courses of action: keeping better records (69 percent), selecting chemicals with reduced toxicity (49 percent) and changing maintenance practices (25 percent).

Association members from 31 states, most of whom were from California (15 percent) were surveyed. □

TURFSEED

Field days make June busy month

SEED COUNTRY — Those landscape managers interested in seed growing and harvesting will be able to gather a wealth of informa-

MITE.



tion at five seed company field days next month.

The parade of events begins June 12 when Jacklin Seed will host its Third Annual Turfgrass Discovery Tour. On display at the Post Falls, Ida. facility will be new tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, Bermudagrass and zoysiagrass cultivars. Jacklin will also offer an up-to-date report and preview of the latest seed priming process and a tour of its new 3,000-square foot greenhouse.

For more information on the event, which will last through June 14, contact Gayle Ward, Doyle Jacklin or Marilyn Deutsch at (800) 635-8726 or (208) 773-7581.

Pure Seed Testing and Turf-Seed companies will have their Seventh Annual Turf Field Day at their research farm near Hubbard, Ore. on June 15. The event, which begins at 1 p.m., will feature tractor-drawn tours of the research plots and an Oregon-style barbeque.

For more information, call (800) 247-6910 or (503) 981-3017.

Pennington Seed will have the grand opening of its new Lebanon, Ore. facility on June 15, beginning at 9 a.m. Pennington has made arrangements to be on the Turf Seed agenda. For more information, call Ronnie Stapp at (404) 342-1234.

Lofts Seed will hold its field day June 21, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., rain or shine. Last year, the company celebrated its 65th anniversary. For more information contact Karna Godridge: (201) 359-1100.

Turf Merchants will have its second annual field day on June 16. For more information, call Turf Merchants at (503) 926-8649. □

RESEARCH

Project to mark H₂O movement

SOCORRO, N.M. — A New

Mexico Tech hydrology professor and a graduate student have teamed up on a project to determine if certain chemical compounds can be used as "tracers" to monitor groundwater movement.

Dr. Robert S. Bowman and Joseph Gibbens told the American Society of Agronomy that fluorinated ben-

zoic acid compounds can now be used for soil and groundwater studies. They are environmentally safe and easy to detect at very low concentrations, they say, adding that some of them have already been used at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant here and by the Illinois Geological Survey. □

GOLF

Architect calls for construction boom

PINEHURST, N.C. — Robert Trent Jones Jr., newly-elected president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), has called for the construction of 5,000 new golf courses in the United States in the next 10 years.

Jones, architect of more than 150 golf courses all over the world, gave his rallying call recently, immediately after being elected president of the ASGCA at its annual meeting.

"The National Golf Foundation (NGF) says we must add at least one golf course every day for the next 10 years to meet the exploding demand for golf throughout the country," Jones said during his acceptance speech. "We should probably round that



Jones

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figure off to 5,000 before the year 2000 and consider it one of the greatest challenges this organization has ever faced.

"It is also a tremendous challenge to the creative energy and talent of each one of us individually. The game has never been more popular than it is today, and it is our responsibility to meet that demand with more and consistently better work.

"I think it is time that we, the devilish architects of this glorious game, those of us who design those forbidding bunkers and undulating putting surfaces, join with the NGF, the GCSAA, the PGA, the TPC and the golf media to proclaim emphatically that we need 5,000 more golf courses in the next 10 years," Jones continued. "Because up to 70 percent of these new courses should be public rather than private, we especially need them in the cities, suburbs and counties."

Jones, 49, is the son of the ASGCA founder. His father and his brother Rees have previously served as ASGCA presidents. □

RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Rails-to-trails numbers 203

WASHINGTON — The number of rails-to-trails conversions in the U.S. has climbed to 203, and Americans used these trails an estimated 27 million times during 1988. This, according to statistics from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Both numbers were up sharply from a similar survey last year.

"By every measure, converting abandoned rails to trails is an extremely popular issue, from Maine to California," says RTC program director Peter Harnik. "We know of at least 250 such campaigns under way right now and we learn of a new effort literally every day."

The states with the greatest rail-to-trail

mileage are Wisconsin, Washington, Minnesota, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Iowa. The states with the largest number of trails are California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Washington and Pennsylvania.

Although there are no precise figures on how many miles of old track are available for trail use, the U.S. rail system has shrunk from about 300,000 miles in 1920 to about 165,000 miles today. Railroads continue to shed corridors at the rate of 3,000 to 4,000 miles per year.

For further information, to order one of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's publications or to become a member, write to the group at 1400 16th St. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036. □

CHEMICALS

New weapon in Dutch elm fight

HINSDALE, Ill. — Officials here have urged board members to employ Tempo 2 in the village's fight against Dutch elm disease, even though the product hadn't yet been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency against elm bark beetles.

Three of four Hinsdale Environment and Public Services Committee members voted to substitute Tempo 2 for methoxychlor, citing resident's complaints about the product, according to a *Chicago Tribune* report.

Board members said they will not solicit bids on the product until it was approved by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. □

GOLF

Architects develop formal request

CHICAGO — In an effort to simplify the bidding process for new golf course projects, the American Society of Golf Course Architects has de-

veloped a Request for Proposal form for new golf course projects.

The RFT is a condensed, 12-page document listing project specifics for the golf course architect. The brevity of the proposal, according to former ASGCA president Pete Dye, "simplifies the bidding procedure and encourages more course designers to respond to proposals."

The proposal is broken down into six streamlined categories: General Notice, Project Description, Scope of Services, Owner's Responsibilities, Submittal Requirements and Selection Process.

Copies of the RFP can be obtained by writing to the ASGCA, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, IL 60601. □

MANAGEMENT

Marketing: best laid plans work

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — According to one market expert, the three realities in marketing are: how you see your company; how you think your customers see your company; the truth.

And to make sure you're telling the truth and being heard, target your markets wisely.

Mike Hiller, an associate with All-Green Management Associates, led a seminar on effective marketing during the last Landscape Exposition in Nashville, Tenn., and found that in many cases, marketing is mistaken for advertising. "You must distinguish the two," advises Hiller. "Advertising becomes part of the marketing plan after you decide who you want to reach, and what you want to say."

When developing a marketing plan, know the reasons why. Clarify those reasons in a mission statement that defines company philosophy and clarifies the nature of your business and its purpose, Hiller says. Then,

follow through via tactically designed steps.

According to Hiller, key elements of a marketing plan include:

- timetables for implementation;
- an idea of the expected results;
- awareness of who is responsible for monitoring each step of plan;
- anticipated revenue per customer per year from the plan;
- a contingency plan or stop date in the event of failure;
- expected leads to be generated;
- closed leads needed to make the plan worthwhile.

Hiller says market segmentation variables can greatly affect a marketing plan.

"Do you know your target market? Who are they? Where are they? Why did they buy from you? There are more than 200 marketing variables we know of that go beyond the basic demographics of age, sex and income," says Hiller, including geographic location, psychological profile, benefit analysis and social segmentation.

"Target your market, be organized and know what your plan will cost," says Hiller. "Give your banker a reason to support you."

According to Hiller, "the marketing pie" of price, promotion, distribution and product has been modified. For the most part, says Hiller, lawn care customers aren't concerned with how you go about your work or the products you are using, as long as safety is a priority. From a product standpoint, you all do the same thing, so eliminate product as a marketing advantage. And if you market by price alone, you'll attract disloyal customers and more service calls. Research shows that homeowners care most about competence and results.

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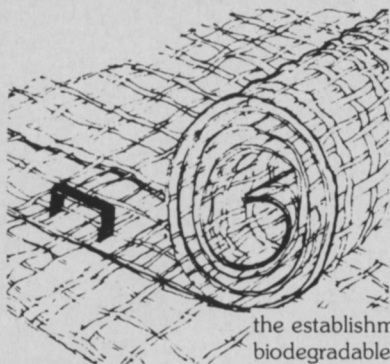
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groundwork for the future and builds credibility and image," Hiller says. If you want high visibility, join a local chamber of commerce or get involved in sponsorships.

And when you sell, don't sell jargon. According to Hiller, services rendered are often below customer expectations, causing customers to look elsewhere for service, "which is why some companies continue to find new customers in a saturated market." □

TREES

How many trees are in Texas?

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — How many native Texas trees have been identified and documented?

If your answer is 222, you guessed correctly, according to research scientist Benjamin Jackson Simpson, of Dallas, who has spent many years studying and writing about native trees found across the Texas landscape.

Simpson, who is with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, said the number could be 305 if one added current species, an additional 24 possible species, 51 natives that are considered shrubs and extinct or lost native trees.

Simpson, author of *A Field Guide to Texas Trees*, notes that Texas has from 33 to 45 percent of the native tree species in the United States, but little is known about the native species except among professional botanists and taxonomists. □

SEED

Noxious weed found in seed

WASHINGTON — Noxious weed seed has been found in tall fescue recently imported from Argentina, spurring a quarantine order from the government for all such

seed in Oregon. Also, importers of the seed have been told to reclean, return or destroy the seed on hand.

The government reports finding 100 to 150 serrated tussock seeds per pound in Argentinian tall fescue. One importer, Pennington Seed Company of Madison, Georgia, reported distributing the seed to about 1,700 retail outlets all over the country. The lot numbers of Pennington seed being recalled are 83GSO3G and 83GSO1G. Other importers of the seed include Normarc and Olsen-Fennel, of Oregon, Seaboard Seed Co., of Chicago, Gateway Seed Co., of Missouri and Allied Seed Co., of Idaho.

Anybody in possession of tall fescue seed with Argentinean listed as its place of origin, including seed mixed with Oregon ryegrass or Bermudagrass and coated with fungicide, should have the seed sampled immediately, says Roy Cole, senior operations officer with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service.

Tall fescue is in short supply this year as a result of last summer's drought, says Cole, which is why the seed was imported from a country the U.S. traditionally exports to.

"This has stirred up a lot of interest among state seed officials," says Cole. The seed sold was probably intended for highway rights-of-way, he adds, yet it poses its biggest threat in forage-type areas. "The weed has no nutritional value whatsoever. Animals consume it but can't digest it and eventually they die of malnutrition," says Cole.

Serrated tussock is a very aggressive, perennial, tussock-forming grass with a deep, fibrous root system. Called "the worst of noxious weeds" in the book *Economically Important Foreign Weeds*, the weed delivers an estimated 227 million seeds per acre and is nearly impossible to eradicate. □

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