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TURFSEED

Feds raid seed company, allege false statements

SALEM, Ore. — Federal agents entered the offices of the Olsen-Fennel Seed Co. here, seeking evidence of alleged false statements made to obtain phytosanitary seed inspection certificates.

Records, ledgers and documentation were seized during the April 5 search.

The affidavit alleges that Olsen-Fennel officials obtained the certificates for seed previously imported from Argentina by representing the seed as U.S.-grown. The seed was then exported to foreign buyers.

Assistant U.S. attorney Kent Robinson says such actions would be in violation of the U.S. Code which prohibits false statements to government agencies and wire fraud. Both carry maximum penalties of five years imprisonment and fines of up to \$250,000 for individuals and \$500,000 for corporations.

In an unrelated action, the state Department of Agriculture suspended the company's license for thirty days for selling or attempting to sell uncertified, mislabeled seed from Argentina to various U.S. buyers.

Investigations revealed the company knowingly sold grass seed lots that were mislabeled and misrepresented.

Company vice president Richard Olson said federal officials are at fault.

"This Argentina tall fescue entered the country with (federal) approval and they authorized us to go ahead and distribute it," said Olson. "After we did distribute it, that is when they found serrated tussock in it, and found out that their records were not correct and they should not have allowed it (into the U.S.) in the first place."

Olson withheld comment on the allegations that company officials made false statements, but again charged the federal government with delaying action.

"It's ironic that when we asked the federal government for help in this situation," said Olson, "they didn't have the time or the money to help us out of a problem they created. But they certainly seem to have the time and the money to pursue it from the other direction."

—Terry McIver □

LETTERS

Florida super intends no harm

To the editor:

I would like to clarify my position on an interview done with me in your February 1990 issue ("Florida's Best").

While I don't think it was the intent to produce a negative article, several of my peers interpreted it as such.

In the interview concerning northern superintendents coming to Florida, I did not initiate the subject but was asked my opinion. My emphasis was as strong

about a southern superintendent going North as a northern superintendent coming to Florida.

My objective was to point out how complex and diversified golf course superintendents' positions are today in light of aggressive environmental regulations, membership expectations, etc. If anyone believes that a transition from extreme North to South or vice versa is easy, they are not saying much about the complexity of our jobs.

William T. Hiers
John's Island Club,
Vero Beach, Fla.

EVENTS

Mistaken plant

To the editor:

Your February issue included an article entitled "Shout Spring With Colorful Bulbs" by Ann Reilly. While the article was well written, I did note one error. The caption under the first photograph indicated that the scene was located in Colonial Williamsburg; however, this is not the case. The photograph was taken in the Virginia Beach Municipal Center.

While we are pleased and indeed flattered that our efforts have been confused with those of Colonial Williamsburg, we would like to, nonetheless, point out this error.

Edward S. Barnes

Landscape Administrator
Virginia Beach, Va.

To the editor:

Regarding Dr. Rao's answer to a question on pH adjusting in *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT*, February):

Additional products

widely used to buffer pH (not acidize the tank as most other iron products or phosphoric acid will do) are Agri-Plex and Lawn-Plex by RGB Laboratories. We don't know of any other micronutrient products which are true buffers (adjust pH up or down) besides the above-mentioned products. Therefore, you need not buy pH-adjusting solutions; you get the iron/micronutrients for nothing.

Stephen L. Gaynes
RGB Laboratories
Kansas City, Mo.

Correction

In the special advertising supplement which appeared in the February issue of *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT*, it was stated that Paul Luccia works for Heyser Landscaping.

Luccia is not, nor was he ever, employed by Heyser. *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT* apologizes for the error and any inconveniences attributable to the error. □

MAY

16: North Carolina Turf and Landscape Field Day, N.C. State University Turf Field Center and Arboretum. Contact: Bill Wilder, P.O. Box 400, Knightdale, NC 27545; (919) 266-1777.

28-June 1: International Conference on Geotextiles, Geomembranes and Related Products, The Hague, Netherlands. Contact: The Secretary General, 4th Geotextiles Conference, Holland Organizing Center, 16 Lange Voorhout, 2514 EE, The Hague, Netherlands.

JUNE

8-9: Playground Design and Safety Symposium, Chicago, Ill. Contact: National Institute, P.O. Box 1936, Appleton, WI 54913.

11-12: Metropolitan Tree Improvement Alliance annual

conference, Morton Arboretum, Lisle, Ill. Contact: Tom Perry, METRIA executive director, Natural Systems Associates, 5048 Avent Ferry Rd., Raleigh, NC 27606; (919) 859-0031.

11-15, 18-22, 25-29: Landscape School of the South Short Courses, Louisiana State University. Contact: Dr. Neil Odenwald, LSU, (504) 388-6621 or (800) 234-5049.

14-16: Lighting World Trade Show, McCormick Place Exhibition Hall, Chicago, Ill. Contact: Bill Schoenfisch, Illinois Chapter, American Society of Landscape Architects, (914) 658-8393.

21: Troubleshooting Seminar for Tree Planting, University of California, Riverside. Contact: Hartley Bennett, P.O. Box 414, Wickenburg, AZ, 85358; (602) 684-7308.

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