

ments (weed control usually) instead of blanket applications, Green Drop significantly reduced both service delivery and product costs.

"The changes allowed us to get more production out of every truck and still carry about 70 percent less product," says Robinson.

If all Green Drop management's decisions had been as foresighted, Robinson admits he certainly couldn't speak from the perspective he now does.

For instance, the company's Winnipeg operation had "some rocky times" this past season, says John.

"We could blame the economy and other factors, maybe even the environmental factor, but I don't think we should use them as scapegoats."

Instead, he's looking for "hiccups" in his program.

The market's there, he's convinced, and Green Drop will find a way to satisfy it.

"After all, we bought two companies there (Winnipeg)," he says. "We changed the name; there was new management; we changed the program."

Tellingly, the Calgary and Edmonton operations had good seasons.

Says Robinson: "If you really look at the success of a business, really look deeply, it usually comes back to internal changes you make or you don't make."

—Ron Hall

Turfed truck attracts the curious, new customers

Here's a nifty idea that's used to attract possible customers. It's a product of a fertile imagination—not to mention some fertile grass.

■ John Kroll wanted to show prospective customers that his Montane Landscape Company can grow grass just about anywhere.

So he "grew" a truck, a pickup truck covered with Kentucky bluegrass/creeping red fescue sod.



This GMC (Grassy Motor Contraption) pickup truck generates a lot of interest at Montane Garden Center.

"We might have 20 people a day stopping to photograph it, and maybe five of them stop in to the garden center to ask about it. It's good for business," says Cam McTavish, who works in the nearby Montane Garden Center.

Establishing nice lawns is difficult in the company's market area, the Canmore Valley which cuts through the east face of the Canadian Rockies about 30 miles west of Calgary. The soil is silty, basically glacial deposit.

"We wanted something to show how good we are with grass," he explains. "We thought about growing grass on plywood and we had some other ideas, but then we realized we could use this old beater of a truck—it's a GMC I think."

The truck ("Yes, I'm pretty sure it still runs," says McTavish) is parked near the Montane Garden Center on the outskirts of Canmore, Alberta, Canada, population about 6,000.

Montane Landscaping is a full-service landscape firm servicing several small communities just west of Calgary.

How did Montane Landscape get the sod to stick to the truck?

"It's a secret," says McTavish, "but the body of that truck must be perforated with a zillion screw holes."

The truck is watered three times a day to keep it green.

Yea, but, how often is it mowed?

—Ron Hall

Airwaves to carry lawn/landscape tips

John Deere's Bob Tracinski reveals an electronic campaign to rekindle pride in home lawns.

■ An ambitious campaign to reinvigorate pride in home lawns sprouts this spring.

A by-product of the effort—indeed, its goal—will be to promote the Professional

Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) as a helpful and knowledgeable spokes-organization for lawn care.

The effort is informational and involves five 60-second public service announcements (PSAs) for radio and one for television. Production of the announcements began in September and should begin popping up on radio and television in early spring 1992.

PLCAA directors late this summer endorsed