

Grab Bag

Consumer buys in Green Industry grew in 1997

With a robust national economy and a strong national housing market as a backdrop, more than 22 million U.S. households spent \$14.6 billion on professional landscape/lawn care/tree care in 1997, reported a recent Gallup survey—a one million increase in the number of households using these services and a \$600 million rise in spending over 1996.

The study also estimates that 24.4 million households plan to purchase these services in 1998, a two million (nine percent) increase. Since 1993, more than 22 million households have spent over \$14 billion annually on professional landscape, lawn care and tree care services.

► Homeowners in the West led in total spending on these services, accounting for 38 percent of all expenditures.

► Total homeowner spending for tree care showed the largest increase, rising by 50 percent to \$2.4 billion. This category also saw the greatest growth in average amount spent (38 percent to \$434) and household participation (21 percent to 5.6 million).

► Lawn and landscape maintenance accounted for the largest dollar volume (\$7.6 billion) and the greatest household participation (14.3 million) while landscape installation/construction represented the largest average amount spent (\$1,772).



Willamette Valley facts

Seed crops of over 573 cultivars from 17 grass and legume species are grown on 440,000 acres in the Willamette Valley.

The annual farm gate value of Willamette Valley grass and legume seed exceeds \$180-200 million annually, with total gross value to the Oregon State economy in excess of \$800 million.

The Willamette Valley seed production industry is dominated by 800 families on farms that range from 200 to 5,000 acres.

Corporate offices of international,

national and regional seed companies are located in the Willamette Valley. Many of these firms specialize in specific market niches. Some companies focus on domestic sales while others may market as much as 30 percent of their production outside the U.S. Some maintain research and development facilities and are actively involved in cultivar development.

Seed brokers continue to provide a service to the industry in matching buyers with sellers of common and publicly available cultivars.

Sowing seed for sport

Seed Research of Oregon and O.B. Sports have announced an agreement whereby O.B. will buy turfgrass seed for overseeding and new projects from SRO, based in Corvallis, OR. The agreement includes superintendent education,

help with grass selection, and assistance with all aspects of turf management. O.B. Sports has 126 holes of golf, and is growing in two courses in Port Orchard, WA and Tucson, AZ. Bob Marshall of O.B. Sports and SRO's Mike Robinson say the agreement will be one to benefit both companies.

Grab Bag features brief observations and prognostications throughout the green industry. If you have an unusual photo or comment you'd like to share with us, please send it in...