

Grab Bag

Lawn Institute merges with Turf Resource Center

With the merger of the Lawn Institute into the Turf Resource Center (TRC) of Turfgrass Producers International (TPI), consumer education is slated to expand. The resources, materials and other assets of the Lawn Institute will be transferred to the TRC's on-going public relations and education program.

"Since we suspended operations a year ago," said Lawn Institute President Scott Patterson, "we have explored a number of ways we could continue the consumer education efforts of the Institute, without the day-to-day management and operational requirements."

David Doguet, TPI's immediate past president and a driving force behind creation of the TRC, said, "Five years ago, when TPI started to consider a public education program, we recognized that some would think we were only concerned with promoting turfgrass sod. However, our intention and results prove that we really want to promote the environmental benefits of turfgrass, regardless of how it is established. Integrating the Lawn Institute's reputation, materials and funds with the TRC will allow this program to do even more, and more effectively."

Turn Merchants Inc. celebrates first 15 years

Over 300 customers, golf course superintendents, and distributors from across the United States helped Turf Merchants Inc. celebrate its 15th anniversary on June 19 at Willamette Valley Vineyards. There were also guests from China, Japan, and New Zealand. Dignitaries at the Customer Appreciation Dinner included State Senator Mae Yin and State Representative Carolyn Oakley. Dr. Joe Vargas, a turf specialist from Michigan State University was guest speaker. Steve Tubbs, president and owner of TMI, gave highlights of the company's growth from a small seed wholesaler to the largest independently owned Oregon seed company in 1998 with sales of over \$40 million when combined with its two affiliates in Missouri and Texas.



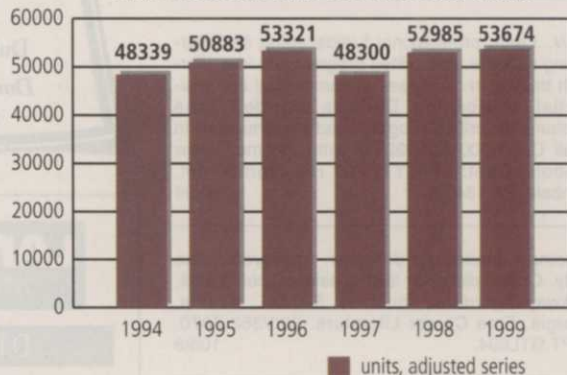
Commercial mowers sold well in '98

Sales of commercial rotary mowers—both riding and intermediate-size walk behinds—were hot in 1998. The market for rotary riders should stay robust through 1999.

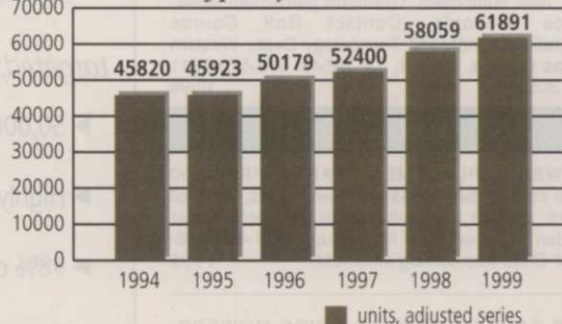
The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, Inc., Alexandria, VA, recently reported that rotary riders had "a substantial increase" of 10.8 percent, pushing shipments to 61,891 units for the model year running from September through August. The number of intermediate walkers rose by 9.7 percent to 52,985 units, rebounding from a disappointing 1997 when sales dropped by 10 percent.

The OPEI projected a strong market for commercial riders again in 1999, a 6.6 percent rise over 1998, or about 61,891 units. Sales of intermediate-size walk mowers shouldn't be as robust with a gain of 1.3 percent estimated.

WALK BEHIND ROTARY TURF MOWERS Intermediate size commercial units



RIDING ROTARY TURF MOWERS All types of commercial units



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