

FQPA opened industry's eyes in '98

COLUMBUS, OHIO—Widespread industry concern this past year over implementation of The Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA) had some positive effects, said Anne R. Leslie, a former official of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

This concern, expressed in letters and meetings with federal office-holders, focused on the EPA's methods for review of pesticide residues on foods, and whether these methods were fair and accurate, said



Former EPA official
Anne R. Leslie

Leslie, a speaker at the Ohio Turfgrass Conference here in December. The greatest fear by pesticide-using industries

like agriculture and turf/ornamental care is that the FQPA will result in the loss of popular chemical control products.

The climax of this concern in 1998 was a memo from Vice President Al Gore to the EPA in April. The memo instructed the EPA to:

- ▶ ensure that its decisions are made based on the best available science.
- ▶ ease the transition to new pest management strate-

gies for affected pesticide users.

▶ make the regulatory process transparent.

▶ consult with affected stakeholders.

Also, it led to the establishment of the Tolerance Reassessment Advisory Committee (TRAC) in 1998. TRAC consisted of representatives from growers, pesticide registrants, food processors, environmental groups and medical professionals.

Although uncertainty remains about FQPA's effects on the green industry, she said that the EPA is trying to make its decision making process more transparent.

While the FQPA attracted much of the attention of professional pesticide

users, Leslie reported that the EPA nevertheless registered 27 new pesticides this past year. These included 14 "reduced risk" pesticides and 13 conventional chemicals. It also approved 12 biopesticides and 2 antimicrobials, said Leslie, who retired from the EPA this past summer and now consults on IPM and pesticide issues.

Playing the awards game

For 27 years, members of the Professional Grounds Management Society have celebrated the importance of top quality landscape and grounds management through a rigorous judging system, culminating in the Professional Grounds Maintenance Awards. Grand and honor awards are given for winners in a variety of categories — many of which our readers maintain: small residential sites, commercial properties, institutions, multi-family communities, public works and others.

To encourage industry participation in this award program and build a higher consumer awareness of the role of landscape and grounds management, *Landscape Management* has established a partnership with PGMS to become the exclusive sponsor for these awards.

As part of our sponsorship, *Landscape Management* and *Athletic Turf Maintenance & Technology* will promote the best our industry

has to offer in our magazines, on our Website (www.landscapegroup.com) and to the business and consumer press.

Entry is not limited to PGMS members. In fact, it is encouraged throughout the industry. Those who win will survive multiple rounds of judging by experienced, nonpartisan practitioners.

The first of several

award-winning landscapes is featured on page 66. Future issues of LM will include updated contest entry instructions, more award-winning landscapes, a guide on how to present your projects in the best possible light for judging and tips on how to get maximum marketing benefit from your efforts.

Updated entry guidelines will be available at www.landscapegroup.com or by contacting PGMS at 120 Cockeysville Road, Suite 104, Hunt Valley, MD 21030 or call 410/584-9754.



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AgriBioTech takes cost cutting measures

Henderson, NV — AgriBioTech Inc. (ABT), late in 1998, shut down seven facilities in four states, a move that's expected to save the seed company \$750,000 per year. The action led to the elimination of about 20 nonsales jobs in units in South Dakota, Ohio, Kentucky and Missouri.

"We expect better customer service, increased operational efficiencies and reduced cost, to the benefit of our shareholders," president and chief operating officer Kent Schulze said in a statement.

Also, on Dec. 23, 1998, the company said that it had completed the sale of the chemical and fertilizer division of Willamette Seed Co., with about \$20 million in sales, to Wilbur-Ellis Co., San Francisco. ABT kept the seed division of Willamette Seed CO.

ABT announced that it had increased equity by about \$18 million through an \$11.2-million private placement and a \$6.7-million voluntary warrant exercise. It has also received commitments for at least \$25 million of long-term debt, which it expected to close before Christmas.

Repeat of hopper invasion in SW not likely in '99

A grasshopper isn't your everyday turf or landscape pest, but millions of them in a particular area can devastate plants, any plants. The summer of 1998 saw grasshopper populations rise so dramatically in some areas of the Southwest that they damaged turf and ornamentals.

"They'll eat anything green, killing grass, landscape plants, trees and shrubs," said Dr. Cliff Hoelscher, an extension specialist with Texas A&M University. "We've had 60 counties in Texas that have had an unbelievable problem." And Hoelscher wouldn't rule out similar problems in the Southwest this growing season, although conditions shouldn't be as favorable for infestations.

The El Niño, blamed for about every unusual weather occurrence last year, is getting the blame for the grasshoppers too — at least in part. Scientists theorize that the wet '98 spring in the Southwest in 1998 spurred plant growth and allowed the hungry hoppers to multiply.

"Grasshoppers are going to move around and find the greenest, most lush things," said Dr. John Jackman, an entomologist with the Texas Agricultural Ex-

tension. "As they move off dry pastures to find something to eat, they are concentrated."

There are ways to combat more localized infestations. One is to try to exclude them from a property or plant material. Since grasshoppers like tall vegetation to hide in, mowing a barrier 20 feet wide around a property will reduce their num-



bers significantly. Also, a plastic, small-mesh product called Row Cover can be used to cover valuable plant material.

For the few grasshoppers that cause more annoyance to property owners than landscape damage, Hoelscher suggested that landscape managers can prepare a bait made from Sevin XLR and wheat bran bait. Sevin XLR is labeled for turf and ornamentals, and the label lays out the bait recipe. Hoelscher recommended that molasses be added to the bait to keep it from drying out too quickly during hot, dry weather.

"The bait needs to be placed in open areas," says Hoelscher. "You can't put it in the grass because the hoppers can't find it. If you have open areas in ornamental beds it works quite well there."

For a more info on grasshopper control, obtain the pamphlet Grasshopper Integrated Pest Management, free from the U.S. Animal Health and Plant Inspection Service (APHIS), 4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737. Ask for technical publication 1809. **LM**

Milliken teams up with Emerald Isle

SPARTENBURG, SC— Milliken Chemical, headquartered here, announced in January that it is acquiring the products and brands of Emerald Isle, Ltd., Ann Arbor, MI. The acquisition includes a long-term agreement to codevelop new products for the turf and ornamental market.

"It's a good strategic fit," said Lawrence Kind of Milliken Chemical. "Milliken Chemical and Emerald Isle can combine worldwide distribution and excellent quality products for strong future growth."

Added Bill Middleton, CEO of Emerald Isle: "We see this as an extraordinary opportunity to collaborate with really top-quality people."