

Hot new products

In the world of information overload, it's hard to make an impression. Here are some of the products that caught our attention.

By RON HALL and NANCY STAIRS



KANGA LOADERS

We test-drove new tractors and mowers at the OPEI Expo '98 in Louisville. We cruised the show floor at the GIE in Nashville, and talked to dozens of suppliers at the outdoor demo. We wore out the carpet at the Ohio Turfgrass Show in Columbus, Ohio. We were on the prowl for new products that will catch your eye and help you be more productive this season.

A couple of trends jumped out and smacked us right between the eyes (don't get any ideas), including the incredible popularity, and growing number, of zero-

radius-turn mowers, and the proliferation of the multipurpose, mini-workhorse machines like the Dingo. It was the first introduced into the United States and is now a part of the Toro SiteWorks System™.

MOWERS THAT BITE AND CROWL

Exmark's Rick Curlett, on the show floor at GIE, showed us the new Lazer Z 72-in. mower, and explained the advantages of the new liquid-cooled 22-hp Kawasaki engine.

Encore's new front-cut Prowler features 52- or 61-in. decks, while Ferris Industries touts the new IS™ independent suspension

on its ProCut Z mowers.

Steiner's new zero-turn-radius mower is the ZTM325 with a 61-in. cutting deck. Gravely points to the new maintenance-free Gravely XL Spindles and tungsten carbide-coated blades on its 260Z unit, and Bob-Cat's ZT 100 can finish off 20.4 acres in an eight-hour day.

Scag's new Turf Tiger, with the black stripes across its fenders, looked almost menacing on the GIE show floor, but the Tiger salesman assured us that it's "the smoothest running cat" on turfgrass. And how about these for names—the Great Dane Chariot and its compact brother, the



RAMROD TASKMASTER



TORO DINGO

Kanga Loaders

The latest model from Kanga Loaders, Bixby, OK, has improved lift capacity to 550 lbs. with overload protection; wider frame for maintenance accessibility; steel hydraulic lines; increased hydraulic reservoir capacity and fuel capacity; and 20-hp engines, either gas or diesel. Attachments include: carryall-leveller, trencher, post hole and tree-planting augers, 4-in-1 bucket, broom and two

new additions (an angle backfill blade and a stump grinder).

Hans Schurmann of Anthos Landscape Co., has had the Kanga Loader for about two months and is impressed by its versatility. "Its smallness is actually one of the advantages. Many of the soul-destroying jobs —

like back-breaking digging — have suddenly disappeared and work has become more fun and less tiring."

For more information call 918/629-7230, fax 918/461-0996, on the web at www.kanga-loader.com

Circle No. 274

Ramrod Taskmaster

Ramrod, Minot, ND, promises a mini-skid for any task, with its Taskmaster series. It offers over 20 attachment choices.

Tina Phillips of Landscape Connections, Harrison, OH, says that their Ramrod Taskmaster replaced a worker. "He was going back to college and instead of hiring somebody, we bought a Ramrod," she said. "We can unload the truck with the Ramrod and carry the material to a

specific spot in the yard instead of using a wheelbarrow."

Operating capacity ranges from 550 lbs. to 900 lbs., and most models are available in either gas or diesel. The 550 T-G, when equipped with 4-inch tires, is only 31 inches wide, which allows it to work in very cramped situations. The more powerful 900s are equipped with a dual hydraulic pump, which is ideal for high-output, multiuse attachments, but are still only 36 to 42 inches wide. A stabilizer kit is newly available as an option for the backhoe, as is a dozer blade which can be attached to the center of the backhoe.

For more information call 800/667-1581, email sales@ramrodequip.com, on the web at www.ramrodequip.com or Circle No. 275

Toro

Toro, Bloomington, MN, has the SiteWork Systems products, a line of rugged equipment, including the Dingo® compact utility loader and over 35 attachments. The 42-inch width can be reduced to a mere 33-inches when narrow tires are used and, with four-wheel skid steering, the Dingo can spin in its own radius.

It has been an exceptional investment for Paul Ocheltree at British Landscapes, Roseville, MN, who said their Dingo "reduced labor costs considerably and it reduced a lot of hand labor. It's allowed us to do certain projects that I wouldn't have tackled in the past."

Weighing in at 1,600 lbs. makes it gentle on established turf. And, one person can pull the Dingo up to a trailer, install a SiteWork Systems attachment in less than 60 seconds and be back to work. The Dingo features a two-pump hydraulic system and all the attachments fit on a specially designed trailer for easy transport.

MORE, MORE, MORE

Some of the other products we noticed seem to be ideas whose time has come, or

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Chariot Jr.? Both bright yellow zero-radius-turn riders come with paw prints on their fenders. Buying a new mower in 1999 could be almost as exciting as buying a new car.

FUN, FLEXIBLE AND AFFORDABLE

Some contractors are going to smaller equipment to get jobs done. Smaller equipment is easier to store, easier to transport to job sites and, with an explosion of attachments, some of these units perform an incredible number of functions.

A number of mini skid-steer loaders meet the needs for carrying out work in smaller spaces, which, considering that lots are getting smaller and condominiums can often have fairly limited access, is valuable.

New turf varieties keep sprouting

Turfgrass breeders and turfgrass seed marketers aren't slowing down. New varieties continue to enter the marketplace. Most new varieties have these characteristics in common: darker green color, finer leaf blade texture and better disease and insect resistance.

The Roberts Seed Company, Tangent, OR, introduces **Racer**, developed at the Pickseed/Roberts Research Station. Roberts claims it offers excellent disease resistance and showed superior summer performance and persistence in the Middle Atlantic states and in the transition zone. It will be available for use in Roberts' blends, and in mixes with Kentucky bluegrasses.

Pandora perennial ryegrass from **Western Productions**, Woodburn, OR, is a fast establisher. It has shown "outstanding" overseeding qualities in the transition zone, Western claims, although it also performs well in a variety of climates.

Jacklin's new perennial ryegrass is **Top-Gun**, described as a high-density turf with a medium-dark green color and medium-fine texture. Jacklin also offers **Arabia** turf-type tall fescue, which is endophyte enhanced and features top-net blotch resistance. It has a dark green color and can be planted in full sun or moderate shade.

Medalist America says its **Bluemoon** Kentucky bluegrass is the darkest of any Kentucky bluegrass with a rich green leaf color. It features a fairway performance down to one-half inch mowing.

On the bermudagrass front, interest is building for **TifSport**, a new hybrid bermudagrass that's more cold tolerant than older hybrid varieties and more likely to resist mole cricket damage. A unique growers cooperative has been formed to produce and market the grass that was developed by Dr. Wayne Hanna's program in Georgia.

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in some cases, a new take on a good old standby. We didn't have room for everything, unfortunately, but that is why we have a monthly Products Review section in *Landscape Management*.

Don't move flowers, McStack them

The McStack attracted a lot of attention at the GIE Show in Nashville this past fall. The McStack is a system of racks that fit on the back of a truck. The racks can be loaded with plants and stacked. Then the entire racks, or "McStacks" as they are called, can be lifted off at once with a forklift or a loader with forks, pallet jack or McStack dolly. The system was developed a couple of years ago as an alternative to loading and unloading nursery stock one plant at a time. Imagine how much time you could save at a big commercial flower job. Recently Bill Gerhardt, operator of Greenscape, Columbus, OH, has adapted the McStack for even more landscape uses.

PLANT HEALTH CARE PRODUCTS

Green for Life™

Plant Health Care, Inc. offers a comprehensive line of mycorrhizal fungal inoculants, biostimulants, biopesticides, biofertilizers and water management products, specifically formulated to help maintain optimal growth and quality.

MYCORRHIZAL FUNGAL INOCULANTS



Mycor™ Palm Saver™ Inoculant

6-3-6 + Micros
A palm fertilizer and organic soil

conditioner with beneficial mycorrhizal fungi and Nitrogen fixing/Phosphorus solubilizing bacteria to improve feeder root growth and survival of palms and related species. Used at planting or as a vertimulch.



Mycor™ Tree Saver™ Transplant Inoculant

Spores of endo- and

ectomycorrhizal fungi mixed with Terra-Sorb™ planting gel, yucca extract, seakelp, and humate soil conditioners. Used to eliminate rework when planting landscape trees and shrubs.



Mycor™ Plant Saver™ 4-7-4 Planting Inoculant

Combines

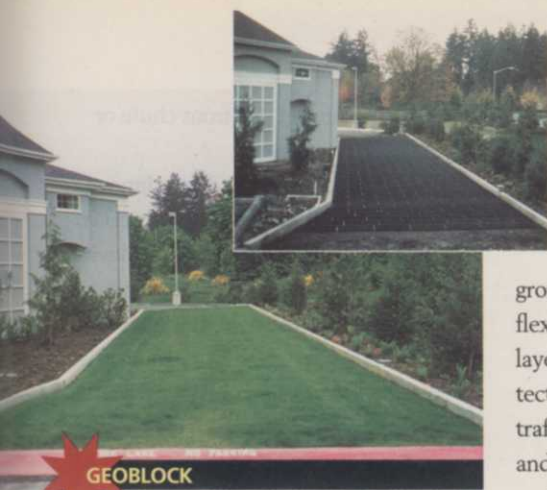
Healthy Start™ Biofertilizer with endo- and ectomycorrhizal fungi, beneficial bacteria, biostimulants and humic acid to create ideal growing conditions when planting containerized perennials, shrubs, vines and small trees.



Healthy Start™ 3-4-3 Biofertilizer

A totally natural fertility system for new flower and sod

installation. Healthy Start™ contains NPK and a range of micronutrients derived from organic plant and animal proteins, combined with humic acids to recondition poor soils, and Nitrogen fixing and Phosphorus solubilizing bacteria.



GEOBLOCK

Contact McStack at 800/646-2782 or visit its website at www.mcstack.com.

Circle No. 276

The porous pavement system has additional benefits: more pleasing aesthetically than pavement or cement, as well as slowing runoff and allowing rain to percolate into the ground. The Geoblock system creates a flexible structural bridge within the topsoil layer, promoting turfgrass growth and protecting it from vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It provides the load support needed and also increases green space.

For more information call Presto Products Co., Appleton, WI, 800/548-3424, or try the web at www.prestogeo.com.

Circle No. 277

cluding steep slopes and banks. The deck design virtually eliminates scalping and the constant cushion of air glides over the ground allows operators to mow in any direction at any time.

The aluminum cutting disc and three Zytel composite metal-edged blades cut a 16-inch swath with the HM16R2 and 19 inches with the HM19S2, and cutting



THE HOVERMOWER™

Many uses for porous pavement system

Jeff Martella, manager of Homestead Village, Bellevue, WA, says that using Geoblock® for emergency vehicle access was a good move. "It looks like a putting green. It's nearly invisible, you can't tell it's there at all."

For those hard-to-reach spots

The HM19S2 can get into places that other mowers cannot. The Hover-Mower™ won't take the place of riders and walk-behinds, but this unit from Eastman Industries, Portland, ME, provides an option for those hard-to-reach places, in-

FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR PLANTS

Plants already know how to grow. Our job as horticulture professionals is to create those conditions that best enable natural growth mechanisms to perform as desired.



Call Now and Receive a **FREE** Sample of **PHC™ BioPak™ Plus**



All PHC Products are available from your local distributor

1-800-421-9051
www.planthealthcare.com

Not valid with any other offers. Green for Life™, Yuccah™, PHC™, MycoTree™, Mycor™, BioPak™, Terra-Sorb™, Palm Saver™, BioPam™, TerraPam™, A Natural Systems Approach™, Tree Saver™, Healthy Start™ and PlantSaver™ are trademarks of PHC Royalty Corp., ©1999

A Natural Systems Approach™



PHC™ BioPak™ Biostimulant

A dry, water soluble biostimulant with beneficial bacteria for promoting root growth, branching and flowering of container, ornamental and bareroot plants. Contains spores of nitrogen fixing, phosphorus solubilizing and growth promoting bacteria, together with yucca, seakelp, humic extracts, amino acids and vitamins.

New! PHC™ BioPak™ Plus Biostimulant **FREE!**
PHC™ BioPak™ Plus is a premium water soluble blend of beneficial rhizosphere bacteria, chelated micronutrients, organic biostimulants and yucca plant extract wetting agent. BioPak™ Plus improves the nutritional health, color and vigor of stressed plants and turfgrasses.



Yuccah™ Natural Wetting Agent

A natural based soil wetting agent and microbial stimulant for turf growing in dry, compacted and hard-to-wet soils. Yuccah™ is derived from *Yucca schidigera* plant extract.

Terra-Sorb™ Hydrogel Products

PHC™ is the sole manufacturer of Terra-Sorb™ products. Terra-Sorb™ hydrogel is used on sod, new grass seed, potted plants and flower beds to improve water retention.

TerraPam™ Tackifier **New!**

A polyacrylamide tackifier used to ensure effective hydroseeding by binding together the various components of the hydromulch, which improves water penetration and retention, and maintains a cool soil temperature. This results in optimum germination and soil stability. Also an effective binder on dirt roads, reducing erosion and dust problems.

BioPam™ Tackifier and Inoculant **New!**

A tackifier/biostimulant used to ensure effective hydroseeding by binding together the various components of hydromulch while improving seed establishment. Also contains BioPak™, a dry soluble biostimulant with Nitrogen fixing Phosphorus solubilizing and growth promoting bacteria.

height is adjustable from 1 to 3 inches. In addition, a unique air-mulching system cuts and recirculates the grass and continues the mulching process, for a clean well-mulched lawn.

The HM16R2 has a Robin 2-hp, 2-stroke engine, a 12-inch impeller and weighs 19 lbs., while the HM19S2 has a Suzuki 3.8-hp, 2-stroke engine, a 15-inch impeller and weighs 37 lbs. For more information contact Eastman at 800/760-1680, fax 815/363-0933 or

Circle No. 278

Stihl Power Scythe

The new FH 75 Power Scythe from Stihl, Virginia Beach, VA, trims shrubs, grass and weeds in close proximity to cars, windows or people. It uses a "hedge-trimming" concept, and shrubs, weeds and grass simply "lay down" after being cut, as opposed to being scattered by a traditional string trimmer.

A unique gearbox protects the FH 75 from concrete sidewalks and roadways and the blade tip is protected. In addition, the



THE POWER SCYTHE™

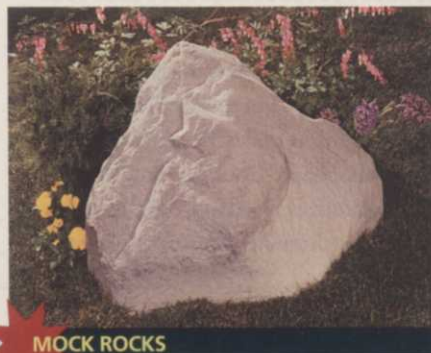
unit will articulate to provide versatility in cutting angles and application. It also features the 4137 family engine with interchangeable parts and is equipped with the Easy Start™ system consisting of the Elastostart™ shock absorbing handle and a fuel prime bulb.

For more information call 800/GO-STIHL, visit www.stihlusa.com or
Circle No. 279

Hide more than your key under these

"It's easier than trying to move a big (real) rock and if you change your mind about the location you can move it somewhere else," says Jay Janosz, J&L Materials, Thousand Oaks, CA. He's talking about Mock Rocks, artificial landscaping rocks made by DekorRa Products LLC, Poynette, WI.

These rocks are functional as well as decorative. Mock Rocks have a hollow cavity inside to cover well/septic vent pipes and other unattractive items in the landscape. The Thermostone™ material looks like natural rock, and is impact and abrasion resistant. Mock Rocks weigh only 8 pounds



MOCK ROCKS

and come in two styles and three colors: fieldstone, riverbed and quartzite.

The company is planning on broadening the product line by creating rocks suitable for unobtrusive lightscaping applications.

For more information call 888/635-8585 or visit the web at www.dekorraproducts.com or
Circle No. 280

Monster mulch mover

The Mulch Mule is the ultimate mulch-moving machine from Green Industry Innovators, Louisville, OH. Not only does this mean no more forking or shovelling to unload material, but the 15-yard capacity Mulch Mule can be used to haul leaves, snow and other landscape debris or materials. It can be pulled with a 3/4-ton pickup and has a dependable 11-hp Honda-powered electric start engine with charging system. All components are hydraulically operated. Material is moved by a steel-chain web system and can be unloaded into a

wheelbarrow/bucket out-front chute or out the back swing gate.

Todd Pugh of Green Industry Innovators points out, "It has a lot of practical engineering on it. The features on the device have been formulated directly by landscape managers in the field. It is not an engineer behind a desk who's designing this."

For more information call 330/875-0769.
Circle No. 281

All you expect from Cat ... only smaller

One of our editors traveled to North Carolina this winter to learn more about the new Cat® Skid Steer Loader with a broad variety of work tools for nearly every application. She was impressed.

Features include a coupler system for quick secure work tool changes that is also compatible with work tools from other manufacturers; ease of accessibility and excellent visibility due to twin-tilt cylinders; grab irons and skid-resistant steps; ergonomic design for low effort controls using a joystick; both hand and foot throttles for additional engine power; and easy access for maintenance needs.

Six models will be available in 1999: the 216 and 226 with 1,350 and 1,500



CAT SKID STEER LOADER

rated operating capacity and 49 and 54 hp, respectively; the 228 and 248 High Flow models with 1,500 and 2,000 rated operating capacity and 54 and 74 hp, respectively; and the 236 and 246 with 1,750 and 2,000 rated operating capacity and 59 and 74 hp, respectively.

For more information contact your local Caterpillar dealer or Cat Rental Store or
Circle No. 282