

Weed Man launches move into U.S.

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO — Weed Man, Canada's largest lawn care company, is making a concerted effort to enter the U.S. market as part of its five-year expansion goals. Key markets include both northern and southern turf areas, especially markets with populations of 100,000 people or less.

In an exclusive interview with *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT*, Des Rice, Weed Man's owner and founder; Roger Mongeon, Weed Man U.S.A.'s president; Michael Kernaghan, Weed Man International's vice president; and Terry Kurth, Lawn Care of Wisconsin, Inc. discussed the company's expansion plans.

The plans include adding as many as 100 new territories in the United States as part of a five-year strategic plan.

"We're celebrating our 30th year in business in 2000," says Rice. "We were holding back but now we're psychologically ready, have the people in place and have the systems in place to make the push into the United States. We now have the opportunities."

Turf Management Systems Inc., Mississauga, Ontario, owns Weed Man.

Although there are Weed Man franchises in Rochester, NY, Denver and the Seattle area, this push is more substantive. According to Mongeon, the expansion will grow three ways: Weed Man corporate stores; Weed Man U.S.A. licenses to submaster franchisors in key turf zones; and Weed Man U.S.A. individual unit franchises to third parties. Terry Kurth will work as liaison with Weed Man U.S.A. during the expansion into U.S. markets.

What will this mean to the lawn care industry? Weed Man's strong presence in Canadian markets, customer loyalty (75% to 85% retention rate), proprietary business management and computer sys-



Weed Man's key management team: Roger Mongeon, President (Weed Man U.S.A.); Des Rice, President (Weed Man International); Dennis Blair, Branch Manager; Michael Kernaghan, Vice President (Weed Man International)

tems and success with franchisors (1/2 of 1% turnover) will make it an interesting alternative in the market.

"If an established lawn care company wants to expand, this is perfect for them," notes Kurth. "If you're a landscape maintenance contractor who wants to offer a one-stop shop to compete with consolidating firms, this is good for you."

Look for a strong campaign to brand Weed Man in the United States, says Kernaghan. "Our trademark is very strong in Canada — we're synonymous with lawn care here."

Weed Man currently serves around 350,000 residential homes throughout Canada through 135 franchises from Newfoundland to British Columbia.

—Sue Gibson

Husqvarna, Yazoo/Kees seal deal

CHARLOTTE, NC— Ending months of speculation on a rumored acquisition, Husqvarna Forest & Garden announced it has purchased the turf care assets of Yazoo/Kees, Beatrice, NE. According to Dave Zerfoss, Husqvarna's President, "This acquisition creates a complete line of offerings, making Husqvarna a total source for all lawn and garden and commercial needs."

Zerfoss explained the acquisition was a logical move in today's market: "The green industry is in a powerful growth phase and we intend to be the leading source for all outdoor power equipment needs. We already have a premium line-up of commercial hand-held products in place for the year 2000."

While Yazoo/Kees' business will begin immediate integration into Husqvarna's U.S. operations, its products will be marketed as the Yazoo/Kees brand through Husqvarna's dealer/distributor network until at least June 30, 2000.

N.C. landscapers regroup after Floyd destruction

RALEIGH, NC — Hurricane Floyd pounded eastern North Carolina with record-breaking rains this past September, resulting in nearly \$6 billion in damage, 30,000 destroyed homes and 35 deaths. Most of the damage resulted from flooding.

Landscaping businesses also felt the sting of the hurricane, and now deal with the aftermath. The damage varies from devastated properties to minor tree damage to severe employee cutbacks due to lost production days.

Tree damage was incredible. "The biggest thing is the trees," said Carol West, Creative Gardens landscape contractor in Winterville, NC. "We had to go through all of the trees that had been put in since last fall. Many of the young trees had over a 30° lift. We had to stake all of the trees due to the wind and extra water."

Erosion was also widespread. "Most of the erosion occurred on areas that were presently under construction for landscaping, where we had soil mounded and we hadn't put out the sod yet," said West.

Another major complication was lost production days as employees battled to save their own properties, or where unable to work due to the weather.

Matthew Erwin of North State Gardens in Hampstead, NC, told of lost production days: "We've had some employees effected by the floods and they're just now getting back to work. Everyone who can make it to work has been to work since the hurricane, but some folks are just coming back today (Sept. 28)."

Turfenders Landscape Services in Raleigh experienced similar difficulties. Steve Hill explained, "Some roads are closed due to flooding, and bridges are out. We've had to reroute crews and go around the damage, which has effected us from getting people to work."

West also admitted that "some jobs are put on hold because we cannot get any topsoil right now. We're in the position our company cannot continue to

pay people when we're not earning money. Everyone is touched in some way." For more on severe weather's effects, turn to page 22.

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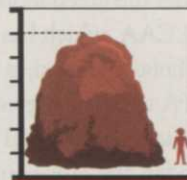
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Be the 'lips' of RISE

WASHINGTON — Local pesticide regulation initiatives are cropping up around the country, reported several attendees of the annual meeting for RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment). While the organization responds rapidly to state and federal level initiatives, it's much harder to respond quickly at the local level before decisions are made, said Fred Langley, manager of state government relations.

Quick response program

The key to dealing effectively with local initiatives is to respond quickly, inform state and national groups like RISE of the initiatives and become involved in your own local politics, Langley said "Recently, 25 states have taken up the issue of school use of pesticides in various forms."

Other local issues to watch include pesticide use reporting requirements,

water quality issues, challenges to pre-emption, separation of "urban" vs. "ag" chemical use and continued pressure to manage nutrient loads in the environment.

'Eyes and ears' alert

In response, RISE announced it has started a two-step reporting and response process. In the "eyes and ears" campaign, any industry insider can report on any local pesticide regulation initiative using a simple fax, telephone or email system. Step two involves becoming the "lips" of RISE as a spokesperson within your own school district or municipality.

RISE plans to make this easy through the use of its "Local Issues Plan of Action" kit, which includes:

- ▶ quick-response fax forms,
- ▶ sheets describing key issues and the Top 10 cities for anti-pesticide activities,
- ▶ RISE's question and answer booklet
- ▶ "talking points" to use in local

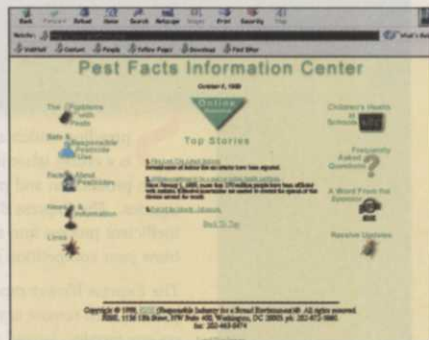
FFA studies green industry careers

LOUISVILLE, KY — This month's 72nd National Future Farmers of America Convention in Louisville will have a new twist — active participation by landscape industry suppliers, contractor firms and associations with the hopes of encouraging many of the 40,000 attendees to consider the green industry for a career. PLCAA, which has established a scholarship fund, is also working with FFA to develop green industry instructional material for FFA teachers. So far, the FFA Foundation has raised over \$250,000 in pledges from the industry toward this effort. Look for convention coverage in future issues.

meetings

- ▶ an article reprint from *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT* ("Take Action on Local Issues"), explaining simple ways to organize local support for pesticide use

For more information on how to get the LIPA kit, contact RISE at 202/872-3860; email: lawder@acpa.org; Web site: www.pestfacts.org.



[CLIPPINGS]

PLCAA adds new GIE position

Green Industry Expo show manager, the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, has added Sims Moore as the new sales & marketing manager to actively market the event. Eleanor Ellison will continue as trade show manager, handling logistics and planning.

Woods buys parts, component firms

In a move to expand its replacement parts business, Woods Equipment Co., Oregon, IL, purchased Tru-Part Mfg. (TISCO), a replacement parts distributor based in St. Paul, MN. Woods also acquired Central Fabricators, an excavator bucket maker in Schofield, WI; as well as Alitec Corp., a Brownsburg, IN firm making skid-steer attachments.

Design Imaging acquires an Edge

Two industry software firms have merged with the acquisition of Edge Software by Design Imaging Group, Holtsville, NY. It will marry DIG's design/build software programs with Edge's management and marketing systems.

New RISE Web site debuts

Looking for good, basic information on pests and their control for your customer newsletters? Try the new Web site for RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) at: www.pestfacts.org. The site features information on problem pests, pesticide handling and use, related information links, news updates and more.

Expo 99 happy with numbers

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute reported that attendance soared at Expo '99 in Louisville, KY, this past July. The number of landscapers/commercial mowers increased by 20% from 1998, equipment rental dealers grew by 11% and dealers/retailers by 3%. OPEI said that 22,982 people (not including exhibitors) attended the 1999 Expo, a 9% increase over attendance in 1998.

Toro & Maruyama extend pact

A new agreement by Toro Co., Bloomington, MN, and Maruyama Mfg. Co., of Tokyo, Japan, extends a 1996 pact for Toro to distribute Maruyama hand-held power equipment in the United States and Canada through 2003.

[CLIPPINGS]

EPA questions Dursban's safety

WASHINGTON — Despite years of use in the landscape industry, the insecticide Dursban (active ingredient: chlorpyrifos) has received low grades from the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The product's reassessment, part of EPA's first round of product reviews in its implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act, makes its reregistration vulnerable unless user groups speak up, warns Tim Maniscalco, government relations manager for Down AgroSciences, based in Indianapolis.

The 60-day public comment period for the risks and benefits of chlorpyrifos began in late September, and it is during this period that Dow Agro is encouraging grounds managers, lawn care operators and landscape contractors to speak out on the product's benefits.

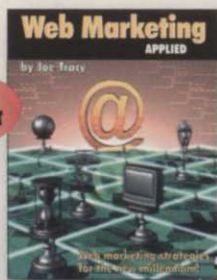
A seat at the table

According to Maniscalco, the EPA's reassessment of Dursban "categorized the risks but didn't have input on the benefits" of the product. "That's why satisfied users need to tell the agency about the benefits for the record."

He explained "stakeholder groups" must identify themselves early in each product's reassessment process to have a place at the negotiating table when EPA moves through the process.

Maniscalco noted that chlorpyrifos has not been "singled out," but that its class — organophosphates — are perceived as "risky." "When users speak out for the benefits, they're saying, 'We're important and need to be considered too,'" he added, saying that users can get information from their Dow representatives.

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Independent Seeds wholesale unit built with 13 companies

Independent Seeds is a consolidation of 13 regional seed companies—the new turf, forage and international wholesale business unit of AgriBioTech, Inc. (ABT). The 13 companies are: Allied Seed, Burlingham, Clark, Olsen-Fennell, Oseco Inc., Peterson, Seed Resource, Van Dyke, W-D Growers

Idaho, Wilber's, Willamette, W-L Research and Zajac Performance. "We plan to provide customers with easy, one-call ordering and the capability to fulfill their orders from the most convenient of several distribution locations," said John Zajac, director of ABT's wholesale turf business unit.

Resource One springs from Terra

MEMPHIS, TN — Dr. Tom Perkins, vice president professional products, is leading Resource One, based here. Resource One is the name of a new marketing division of Cenex/Land O'Lakes Agronomy Co., which combines Terra Professional Products with Land O'Lakes East Turf & Ornamental Products. Perkins joins the company after stints at American Cyanamid, DowElanco and Troy Biosciences Inc. Resource One will supply fertilizer, plant protection products, seed and services to the turf, ornamental, pest control, vegetation management, aquatic and forestry markets.

Corrections:

We must be seeing the word "lawn" a few too many times, because we incorrectly identified August's cover location. The correct name is the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial in Washington, DC. Our apologies.

[CLIPPINGS]

Also, we inadvertently forgot to credit James P. Clever from the Bamboo Gardener for the photograph used on page 32 of our August issue, for which

we apologize. For more information on bamboo in the landscape, contact him at 206/782-3490 or bambuguru@earthlink.net.

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Circle 109

Horticulture

Help Keep Central Park Beautiful!

After 2 years & a \$4.6 million renovation, the North Meadow of Central park is about to be re-opened. The Central Park Conservancy, a prestigious not-for-profit organization, is seeking several Horticulture professionals to maintain this area of the park, which will include 12 ball fields and 5 soccer fields. Candidates for all positions must have a valid driver's license, the ability to operate power equipment and perform manual labor outdoors. The Conservancy is an equal opportunity employer that offers competitive salaries and a generous benefits package.

SECTION SUPERVISOR: Will lead a 7-person crew in the horticultural and operational maintenance of this area. 3-5 years of related park or horticultural supervisory experience; sound organizational skills and a NYS pesticide license are required. **CODE: NMSS**

CREW FORMAN: The successful candidate will be the lead member of the team, assisting the Section Supervisor. Must have related field experience including turf maintenance & a NYS pesticide license. **CODE: NMCF**

ZONE GARDENERS: For this position, you will perform all horticultural and operational duties in this area. Horticultural experience or education is required. **CODE: NMZG**

We are also seeking a **SECTION SUPERVISOR** for the Woodlands area. In addition to a wide variety of horticultural and operational activities, responsibilities include attending Woodland Advisory meetings. At least 2 years of experience in park management, horticulture or a related field including supervisory responsibility are required, as is a NYS pesticide license. **CODE: WSS**

If any of these positions seem to match your talents and have captured your interest, please forward your resume to us, indicating the position code to: **HR Dept., Central Park Conservancy, 14 E. 60th St., NYC 10022** or e-mail to: hrdept@centralparknyc.org. **FAX: (212) 310-6633. EOE**

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