

Scotts seeks distribution pact

The Scotts Co., Marysville, OH, has been talking with Landmark Seed Co. about distribution of Scotts' professional turfgrass seed products through a national network. Scotts said it expects to sign a contract with LandMark by Oct. 1.

WALP's new address

The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals has relocated. Contact WALP at its new address: 1723 100th Place SE, Suite C, Everett, WA 98208-3800. The new telephone number is 425/385-3333, or log on to www.walp.org

[CLIPPINGS]

Eastern landscape pros: 'Send us rain!'

As Hurricane Dennis spun in Atlantic and threatened the Eastern seaboard, landscape and lawn care pros in that area didn't know whether to fear it or welcome it — so desperate were they for rain.

Hardest hit by this summer's drought were the Northeast and the Mid-Atlantic states. Landscapes from Virginia, north into New England and west into parts of the Midwest suffered. The lack of rain forced communities in many Eastern cities to restrict water use for much of the summer.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture in August reported that the drought affected about 20% of the country. By comparison, the 1988 drought reached 35% of the country, while the drought at the height of the Dust Bowl in 1934 covered two-thirds of the country.

"Right now (mid-August) we're pretty much shut down," said Craig Martin, Green Lawn Care, Cumberland, MD. "We had been fairly busy with insecticide applications, but we're waiting for some rain now. The last decent ground moisture we had was about mid-April."

Martin said he expects some of his clients' lawns to show drought damage, but he wouldn't speculate on how much. "Lawns are pretty resilient, and a lot of them will probably come back," he said.

Vincent Tummino, Lawn Doctor, Sayerville, NJ, said the drought resulted in some minor cancellations in his business, but nothing unexpected in light of the conditions. "Most people realized that weather was the biggest factor," he said.

Because of the dry conditions, damage caused by chinch bugs and sod webworms became more apparent, too, he added.

Some landscape managers reported that they curtailed (or stopped) commercial mowing in mid-summer because the turf had stopped growing.

Others said they are considering delaying some of the plant care tasks they normally do in the late summer until later in the season—maybe even spring, depending on early fall rains.

Some explaining to do

"This drought will have an effect for many years to come," said Dan A. Cheslock of Mountaineer Lawn Care Inc. of Morgantown, WV. Clients need to be educated *now* that parched plants of all sizes will require replacement, he cautions, adding that landscape managers can expect this scenario to play out over a lengthy period.

"Three years down the road, it's going to be tough to tell people that their trees are dead because of a 1999 drought," Cheslock said. "People may

LM's CD-Rom links to Internet

CLEVELAND — It's coming. *Landscape Management's* new Internet-linked CD-ROM will be mailed later this year, just in time for viewing on those slow, cold winter days. This new product combines suppliers' landscape and lawn care product videos with photographs and product specifications in one central source you can use again and again. Watch the equipment you need in action. Then, it's easy to click through directly to the supplier's internet site for more information.

It's the first time this *Landscape Management* product will be mailed with our reformatted and expanded GreenBook 2000. Watch for the new and expanded product listings, helpful yellow-page format, updated industry resources, Web listings and technical information sheets. For more information, contact LM at _____.



develop the inference that you killed their tree."

On the plus side, Mountaineer plans to pick up additional clients from among the do-it-yourselfer ranks. "We look for a good season in 2000 because people will look at all the weeds in their lawns and say, 'I need help,' and a lot of lawns are in rough shape."

The deep-root tree feeding that Cheslock typically offers in late summer and early fall is in peril due to soil so dry that it defies penetration. "You can dig down two to three feet and just hit powder," he said.

On the lawns, a regular fall application is going to be a really tough sell unless there's some hurricane-like rainfall — and soon, he said. "If we haven't had any rain by mid-September, we'll hold

off on the renovating until the spring, even though we prefer the fall."

Landscape managers in some areas are being advised that replacement of damaged plant specimens and any new installations be delayed until the parched ground itself recovers.

"I would say wait until spring because the water table is so low," said Frank Elefante of Nielsen-Elefante Nurseries in Lincoln Park, NJ. "The downward pull from the dryness is so acute that the water goes right through and doesn't soak in — the plantings won't survive."

Elefante observes that this summer's oppressive heat has added additional stress. "You have a lot of plants that are scorched," he reported.

— James E. Guyette

Textron acquiring OmniQuip

Textron Inc., Port Washington, WI, is merging with OmniQuip International Inc. OmniQuip builds light construction equipment, including skid steer loaders. The agreement provides for an all-cash tender offer of \$477 million by Textron for all of OmniQuip's outstanding shares of common stock and is expected to close by Sept. 24.

Western Productions' varieties

Western Productions Inc., Woodburn, OR, reports that its Westlawn WP 200 and Westlawn RSII perennial ryegrasses are in good supply with stable prices, as are its turf-type tall fescue varieties WPEZE and Good-En. Average quantities of blue-grasses, Gateway and WP888, are available. Prices are slightly higher for Gateway as well as for Kenicott creeping red fescue. LM inadvertently omitted these varieties in its August seed report.

[CLIPPINGS]

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