

We're talkin'

Dependability, price and everything nice — that's what landscape managers want trucks to be made of



Some landscape managers are fans of Ford and Dodge trucks. Others couldn't part with their Isuzus or Chevys. From super-duty one-ton trucks to lighter utility vehicles, landscape managers will use whatever they need to get the job done in the shortest amount of time, without sacrificing quality or profits. From different backgrounds and various parts of the country, our landscape managers talk trucks.

GMC's/Chevrolet's full-line

▲ T-series tilt-cab Chevy

Product: The WT5500 — a new model to the W-Series tilt cab lineup for Classes 3-5.

Best features:

- A new Duramax 7800 6-cyl. diesel engine with 200 hp at 2400 rpm and 441 lbs. per foot of torque at 1500 rpm.
- Better visibility.
- More maneuverability.
- Extra space and cab comfort — a standard bench seat with adjustable back rests.
- Allows companies in states with more restrictive CDL weight limits to maximize their load/work capabilities.
- All-steel cab with a 76.2-in. bumper-to-back of cab (BBC) dimension.

Product: C-Series medium-duty trucks — Classes 5-8

Best features:

- Available with either Caterpillar's 3126B

turbocharged/aftercooled, in-line, 6-cyl. 7.2-liter (439 cu. in.) medium duty diesel or GM's Vortec 7400 MD gasoline V-8 with sequential port fuel injection and a distributorless ignition.

- Government Vehicle Weight Ratings (GVWR) range from 18,000 to 61,000 lbs.
- The Vortec 7400 MD, available in 210 hp/325-lb. torque and 270 hp/405-lb. torque, provides better acceleration, passing and hauling/towing capability.

Product: T-Series, tilt-cab medium duty trucks span Class 5 through lower end of Class 8.

Best features:

- Available in single-axle, tandem-axle and LoPro models.
- Accommodates bodies up to 28 ft. and payloads to 40,000 lbs.

- Shorter lengths and tighter turn radius especially popular in congested areas.

Product: GMC Sierra 3500 HD, Chevrolet C3500 HD — the 3500 HD chassis cab, with 15,000-lb. GVW capacity, is the highest-capacity work truck in GMC's Sierra line and the heavy-duty workhorse of Chevrolet's C/K lineup.

Best features:

- Appeals to companies moving down in weight class to avoid the ex-



GMC Sierra 3500 HD heavy-duty workhorse

trucks

Big landscape contractors

Tom Davis, president, Bozzuto Landscape Co., Laurel, MD

Company profile: I started this company 25 years ago. When I sold it 10 years ago, our small landscape operation eventually developed into a large one. Today, we service the Baltimore, Washington, D.C. and northern Virginia markets.

Customers: We service



the commercial market including multi-family housing, office buildings, business parks and shopping centers.

Services: About 75% is grounds maintenance and the rest is upgrades or enhancements to properties we already maintain.

Crew size: We run between three- and five-man crews.

Fleet: Our total fleet operation, including our satellites, includes 40 vehicles. We have

special purchasing arrangements with both Ford and Chevrolet which allow us to buy better. We usually employ super duties equipped with an extended cab and a custom body.

Favorite feature(s): Our vehicles are our biggest marketing tool, so we keep them clean and maintain the body. Automatic transmission is important because it decreases driver fatigue.

Cost considerations: We stopped buying crew cabs and instead use extended cabs

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pense and difficulty of getting CDL-certified operators and those moving up from one-ton models.

- Choice of 135.5-, 159.5- and 183.5-in. wheelbases with standard dual rear wheels.

- Accommodates seven different body lengths from 8 to 16 ft. to allow operators to deliver more products.

Product: 2001 Chevy Silverado HD and GMC Sierra HD will be arriving in dealerships this coming fall.

Best features:

- Available in 3/4- and 1-ton versions.
- Powered by an enhanced standard Vortec 6000 or by the all-new Duramax diesel 6600 or Vortec 8100 V-8 engine.
- Available in either automatic or manual transmission.

Bring on the Fords

Product: F-Series

Best features:

- A powerful 5.4-liter, V-8 engine.
- Standard fourth door on F-series super cab models.
- Full-rear passenger compartment.

- Separate platform construction for models over 8,500 lbs.

Product: 2001 F-Series SuperCrew

Best features:

- First of its kind with four full-size doors and the seating area of an Expedition.
- A 17.7-meter (5.5 ft.) pickup box.



Ford F series

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because of the costs involved. We also have our own full-service shop which helps cut down on maintenance and repair costs. We usually buy new but sometimes will purchase nearly new from repossession services.

Dream truck: I feel we have the best trucks now for our company.

Ronald Schmoyer, president, OneSource Landscape & Golf Services, Inc., a division of OneSource Facility Services, Inc. of Tampa, FL

Company profile: We are a publicly-owned company with more than 40,000 employees. District offices are located in Allentown, PA, Port Smith & Williamsburg, VA, Atlanta, GA, Memphis, TN, San Jose, CA, and several Florida locations.

Customers: Mostly commercial accounts and a few larger residential accounts.

Services: We provide landscape maintenance and installation services.

Crew size: We usually run a three-person crew.

Fleet: F150, two-wheel drive, Regular Cab XL; 150, Super Cab, XL; F150 Super Duty Regular Cab XL; F250 Regular Cab XL; F250 Super Cab XL; F250 Super Duty Crew Cab XL; F250 Super Duty; and the Super Cab four-wheel drive XL.

Favorite feature(s): Service and reliability, fuel consumption and cab size are our biggest concerns.

Cost considerations: Leasing has proven to be cost effective for us.

Dream truck: One that will last five years and still look great!

Chris Hayes, vice president/operations, Groundmasters, Inc. of Cincinnati, OH

Company profile: We are a full-service commercial landscape maintenance company with branches in northern Kentucky and Dayton.

Customers: All commercial/industrial customers and some homeowners' associations.

Services: We do everything, including core grounds maintenance, snow removal, ice control, water management, landscape installation and parking lot sweeping.

Crew size: The majority of our crews have two to three employees each. We also have individuals dedicated to tree and shrub applications, water management, landscape and irrigation installation.

Fleet: Mostly Fords with some older

- Available with automatic transmission and two Triton TM V-8 engines — a standard 4.6-liter and optional 5.4-liter engine.
- Dual platform.

Product: 2000 F-Series Super Duty trucks — delivers Ford's improvements to these 8,500-lb. GVW to add comfort, convenience and storage.

Best features:

- Four-wheel ABS standard on Lariat trim level in the F-250 and F-350 pickup and F-350 single rear-wheel chassis.
- Optional bucket seats on XL trim levels for F-250 and F-350 pickups and F-350, -450 and -550 chassis cabs for those who need additional space for custom storage.
- Clean fuel LEV.



2000 F-series

- New manual telescoping trailer tow mirrors available later in the model year.
- Powered by the Triton 5.4-liter V-8 or 6.8-liter V-10 gasoline engines.

Dodge's lineup

Product: 2000 Dodge Dakota Quad (four-door)

Best features:

- Cab is extended to incorporate full-size, front-hinged rear doors.
- 1,450 lbs. of payload and 6,350-lb. trailer towing capacity.
- Six-passenger seating.
- Stow-and-Go 60/40 split rear seats that fold up for unrestricted rear cargo access.
- New Next Generation 4.7-liter Magnum V-8 offers improved power, refinement and durability — the only V-8s available in the compact truck segment.
- Comes in 2WD or choice of part-time or full-time 4WD models.

Product: Dakota R/T compact pickup

Best features:

- 5.9-liter Magnum V-8 and large bore.
- Four-speed transmission.
- Front and rear stabilizer bars for added control.

Product: Dodge Ram Quad



Chris Hayes' fleet is stocked with 20 dump trucks and two 2-ton trucks just under CDL (commercial driver's license).

GMC trucks. Our latest trucks are the F550, super duty, diesel with automatic transmission and the F450 series which also includes four-wheel drive. We have 20 dump trucks and two 2-ton trucks just under CDL (commercial driver's license).

Favorite feature(s): I value dependability the most. Crew cabs are another option because they help transport personnel comfortably and safely. Diesel engines are more cost effective for us because they're

powerful and efficient.

Cost consideration: We always buy new. We like to start from scratch and then custom build it to our own specifications by adding central hydraulics, beds, lighting, snowplow, tool boxes, salt spreader and hitches.

Dream truck: The F550 we have now.

Bill Weissenborn, fleet manager, The Groundskeeper of Tucson, AZ

Company profile: Our company was founded in Tucson in 1976. Today, we have locations in Tucson, Phoenix, Palm Springs, CA and Las Vegas, NV.

Customers: All commercial accounts.

Services: Maintenance, renovation and upgrades as well as flower and small plant installations.

Crew size: Typically around three.

Fleet: I try to stay with 3/4-ton GMC/Chevrolet pickups so I can standardize them to fit our needs. Our other main truck is an Isuzu NPR with a three-passenger cab equipped with a screened-in 16-foot dump bed.

Favorite feature(s): Automatic transmission because it makes the trucks a lot easier to operate and is cost effective.

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Best features:

- Extended cab, full-size pickup with four doors.
- Engine is more powerful and more fuel efficient.



Dodge Ram Quad

- Increased torque with both manual and automatic transmissions.
- Choice of power trains.

Toyota pickups

Product: Tundra full-size pickup truck

Best features:

- i-Force 4.7-liter engine is the first double-overhead cam, 32-valve V-8 offered in the segment.
- 245 hp and 315 lbs. of torque.
- Available in 2WD or 4WD in two-door regular cab with an 8-ft. bed or four-door Access Cab with a 6-1/2 ft.-bed.
- Standard V-6 engine with four-speed automatic or five-speed manual transmission.
- Optional V-8 engine with four-speed automatic transmission.

Product: Tacoma Stepside

Best features:

- Part of a value package that includes several upgrades.
- Available on regular and Xtracab 4x2 Tacoma models, powered by either four-cylinder or V-6 engines.
- Cargo box is a solid steel unit.

Isuzu's debut

Product: NPR (low-cab forward medium-duty)

Best features:

- Front and rear semi-elliptical steel alloy leaf springs and heavy duty shock absorbers.
- Standard self-adjusting front-disc and rear-drum brakes.
- 33.5-in. wide frame that can accommodate standard body installations as long as 10-20 ft.
- RBM of 316,800-lbs. ft./in. for extra strength and durability.
- Variety of wheel bases offered.

Product: Class 3 NPR and Class 4 NPR-HD

Best features:

- Channel section, ladder-type frame with rivetless top flange.
- Heat-treated carbon manganese, low-alloy steel frame is 33.5 in. wide along its total length, allowing for standardized body installations from 12 to 20 ft., with GVWRs from

"We value reliability, fuel efficiency and user friendliness."

— Gloria Gaus, owner, Creative Surroundings

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Cost considerations: We buy most of our trucks used from a major leasing company.

Dream truck: One that doesn't require fuel or a driver.

Small full-service firms

Gloria Gaus, owner/president, Creative Surroundings, Inc. of Columbia, MO

Company profile: Small, full-service firm started in 1982. No other branches.

Customers: Mostly commercial, from hospitals to fast food restaurants.

Services: About 90% is maintenance and the rest is installation.

Crew size: Typically two people.

Fleet: We have a Chevy and a Ford pickup truck as well as a Ford modified

dump truck. Our Toyota works well, especially for some of our employees who need to grab something quickly from the back of the truck.

Favorite feature(s): Our Chevy truck has a camper which protects plants from outside elements. Our Toyota gives us great gas mileage and has a king cab for tool and plant storage. The Ford dump truck gives us all the hauling power we need and we can use.

Cost considerations: We buy mostly used trucks. It's too expensive to buy new.

Dream truck: All the trucks we have now rolled into one — a large, low bed, fuel-efficient truck that can seat up to three crew members comfortably and can heal itself at night.

Mark Erbesfield, owner, Greenmark Landscaping of Atlanta, GA

Company profile: Small full-service firm/single location started 19 years ago.

Customers: Primarily residential, some commercial.

Services: Landscape maintenance, design, installation and hardscape construction.

Crew size: I employ three to four crews of one or two people.

Fleet: Of our 10 vehicles, most of them are Isuzu NPR trucks and the rest are Ford and Chevy pickups.

Favorite feature(s): We value reliability, fuel efficiency, and user friendliness. As far as maintenance, our Isuzus are reliable and adaptable to city driving.

Cost considerations: We buy used.

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12,000 lbs. for NPR and up to 14,500 lbs. for the NPR-HD.

- Offered in 109-in., 132.5-in. and 176-in. wheelbase options.
- Available in two hp configurations.
- Comes with a standard 33-gal. fuel tank.

Product: 6HK1 (Class 5 FRR)

Best features:

- Intercooled engine delivers 200 hp at 2400 rpm with 441 lb./torque at 1500 rpm.
- Available in manual or automatic.
- Rated at 18,000-19,500 lbs. GVW with a payload capacity ranging from 10,183 to 12,080 lbs.

Product: NQR

Best features:

- GVW rating of 17,950 lbs.
- Payload capacity 10,382 to 10,592 lbs.
- Available in four wheelbase choices.
- Can handle bodies ranging from 12 to 20 ft. in length.



NQR is available in four wheelbase choices

- Gross axle ratings range from 6,830 lbs. in the front and 14,550 lbs. in the rear.

Mitsubishi Fuso model change

Product: 2001 FG with automatic transmission.

Best features:

- Only medium-duty cabover truck with four-wheel-drive.
- The Class Three, 12,000-lb. GVWR FG is equipped with an 145-hp engine.
- Handles bodies up to 14-ft. long and is

available in two wheelbases — 109.4 and 133.1 in.

- Rugged, ladder-type frame offers a resistance bending movement (RBM) of 305,800 lb. in. per rail;
- Four-wheel heavy-duty shock absorbers;
- Passenger seats fit two people and its center section can be folded down into a work area.

UD trucks

Product: Three light duty UD trucks from Nissan Diesel America

Best features: UD1200 is rated at 12,000 lbs.; UD1400 at 14,250 lbs.; and the UD1800 CS at 17,995 lbs. All three accommodate various flat beds and van, insulated, towing, landscaping and utility bodies. Trucks have a turning radius ranging from 17.4 to 25.9 feet, large windshields and tilt cab. Medium duty trucks range up to 32,900 lbs. GVWR.

"My dream truck would have a fourth door for greater accessibility."

— David Pursell, owner, U.S. Lawns franchise

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Dream truck: It would have a storage system, ramp for easy access, automatic transmission and a manual gas pumping system allowing drivers to fuel up only once a week.

David & Susan Pursell, owners, U.S. Lawns of Jackson, Ridgeland, MS

Company profile: Started Plant Scape Landscape Management full-time 10 years ago, then, in 1999, converted it into a franchise operation known as U.S. Lawns of Jackson.

Customers: 100% commercial.

Services: We do everything — grass cutting, insect disease control, fertilization, planting annuals, replacing trees, irrigation management, weeding and pruning.

Crew size: We employ between seven to nine people, plus more when needed.

Fleet: We have GMC/Chevrolet extra cab trucks featuring automatic transmission, towing packages for hauling trailers, receiver hitches and enough cab room to fit three people.

Favorite feature(s): Can do without extra cab but can't do without automatic transmission

Cost considerations: I usually buy used but recently purchased a 3/4-ton Chevy XCab CK2500 for pulling trailers.

Dream truck: I would love to have one with a fourth door for greater accessibility and ease.

Chemical lawn care firms

Mike & Ann Pender, owners, Classic

Gardens & Landscape, Inc. of Birmingham, AL

Company profile: We started 10 years ago as a retail garden center. Since then, we've added residential landscaping and lawn care services/chemical applications.

Customers: Primarily residential.

Services: We strictly do landscaping.

Crew size: We have four lawn care technicians and one landscaping crew.

Fleet: For chemical treatments, each employee drives a one-ton, enclosed GMC van. Our landscape crew uses Ford 250, 350 and 450 diesel trucks. The F450 is a dump truck with a 12-foot dump.

Favorite feature(s): Crew cabs are nice because they provide ample seating. Vinyl seats are important because they're easy to

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Sterling Truck Corp.

Product: Acterra, the most modern family of Class 5-8 medium duty trucks on the market.

Best features:

- Available in four different models, covering each of the weight classes from Class 5 to mid-range Class. Can be customized to fit customers' needs.
- Models are: the

- Roominess (2 + 1 seating), superior driver ergonomics, durability.
- Nimble, rugged, easy-to use chassis platform.
- One of the lowest cab heights in the industry in its class.
- Huge windshield for greater visibility.
- Each Acterra is available with the Mercedes-Benz MBE900 engine standard or the choice of the optional Cummins ISB and ISC or Caterpillar 3126B.
- Wide-shoulder stance, sloping hood and modern lines.

- Improves fuel economy since it reaches full torque at such a low RPM of 1,500.

- Short turning radius.
- Plenty of room for an equipment box.
- Three abreast seating and an individual bucket seat for the driver.
- When fitted with a Landscape/Lawn Care Dump Body, it can carry up to three cubic yards of cargo.



Sterling medium-duty trucks 5500, with a GVWR of 19,500 lbs.; the 6500 at 26,000 lbs.; the 7,500 at 33,000 lbs. and the 8500 at 64,000 lbs..

Hino diesel trucks

Product: Hino-FA Lawn Care/Landscape work truck

Best features:

- These cab-over work trucks range in size from 15,000 lbs. GVW to 33,000 lbs.
- A turbo-intercooled JO5C engine pumps out 366-ft. lb. of torque at just 1,500 RPM.

Smaller vehicles & utility vehicles

Metro Motors

Product: MicroTruk four-wheel, off-road utility vehicle

Best features:

- A 1900-lb. payload capacity.
- Two 38 hp models available (76-in. or 85-in. bed); will transport personnel or cargo anywhere.
- All-weather cab provides the most leg room.

"We like automatic transmission because not everybody can drive a manual."
— Gary Yunker, shop manager, Spring-Green Corp.

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maintain. We prefer automatic transmission which makes it easier to drive.

Cost considerations: We lease our vehicles to avoid major repair problems. Image is also important to us.

Dream truck: It's an F350, single wheels in the back, diesel, 4 x 4, automatic, four-door/crew cab.

Gary Yunker, shop manager, Spring-Green Corp. of Plainfield, IL

Company profile: We are a lawn and tree care franchise system with 103 franchises in 19 states. Spring-Green Corp. owns several franchises throughout the United States.

Customers: 85% residential.

Services: We are a full-service lawn and

tree care company that offers spraying, fertilizing and core aeration.

Crew size: One person per vehicle.

Fleet: Our equipment is custom-built to fit our Chevy, Ford, Dodge, and Isuzu trucks. Our Dodges are 3/4- to 1-ton pickups and our Isuzus are cabover W4s with flatbeds.

Favorite feature(s): Most of our trucks are Chevys. The 2500 (8,600 gross vehicle weight) and 3500 (9,200 gross vehicle weight) have a greater carrying capacity and a more durable suspension. We like automatic transmission because not everybody can drive a manual.

Cost considerations: We are a fleet buyer for GM, Dodge and Ford. That helps our franchisees buy more cost-effectively without any price hassles.

Dream truck: One that never breaks down and can be driven 200,000 miles with no repairs.

University campuses

Ronald Cooper, grounds superintendent, Western Oregon University of Monmouth, OR

University profile: A small regional liberal arts university with a five-member grounds department covering 133 acres.

Services: Everything from installation and maintenance to hauling equipment.

Crew size: Depends on the job, but usually small.

Fleet: We have several Ford S10 Rangers, four-cylinder pickups with canopies, three one-ton flat beds (a Dodge,

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- Electronic ignition.
- Heavy duty shock absorbers.
- Four-wheel hydraulic brakes.

John Deere

Product: 6 x 4 Gator

Best features:

- 18-hp, liquid-cooled, 2-cyl. engine.
- Four-wheel drive and differential lock for extra traction.
- Shares the arc-welded unibody design and front suspension



John Deere Gator features 4wd

of the 4 x 2.

- 1,200-lb. towing capacity.
- Low ground pressure and a low center of gravity protects the turf.

Product: Turf General

Best features:

- Available in a 23.5 hp diesel and a 26 hp gas model.
- Five-speed, fully-synchronized transmission.
- Hydrostatic steering.
- Large operator station.
- A 2,650-lb. payload capacity.

White Bear

Product: Whitebear TJ1010FLA

"Jumbo Cab" off-road truckster

Best features:

- Three-cyl. liquid-cooled 39 hp engine.
- Payload of 1,900 lbs.

- Optional body styles include a dump bed, personnel carrier, aluminum topper, scissors lift, beverage cart and a wide array of trams and people movers.

Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products

Product: Cushman Jr. Turf-Truckster

Best features:

- A 2,000 lb.-rated capacity.
- Offers the choice of a no-rust polyethylene dump box or a 47-in. flatbed with sides and a tailgate.
- Standard hydraulic system powers the dump box/bed.
- Three-wheel turf chassis features a 17-ft. clearance circle.
- A 18 hp Kohler Command V-Twin engine.
- A durable 6.5-in. commercial duty clutch.



◀ Ron Cooper purchases vehicles through Oregon's surplus program.

Ford and GMC) and an Isuzu cargo delivery van. We also have a full size half-ton pickup truck as well as a one-ton, 1953 International flatbed with a dump box. We mostly use Cushman utility vehicles on the campus.

Favorite feature(s): We don't need any more power than a four-cylinder unless we go off campus. Automatic transmission is important since many of our students can't drive a stick.

Cost considerations: We never buy new because we can't afford to. I'm able to

purchase good vehicles through our state's surplus program.

Dream truck: A heavy duty, one-and-a-half ton truck with a swap loader — one where you could put different kinds of beds

on it with a dump box. It would also have short side racks to haul dirt or turn it into a dumpster.

Gregg Parks, grounds superintendent, University Of Akron, Akron, OH

University profile: Grounds crews cover 330 acres including 45 parking lots, three parking decks, athletic fields and buildings.

Services: Landscape installations to snow, litter and even gum removal.

Crew: 14 full-time staff persons and between six and 30 part-time temporaries.

Fleet: One-ton F250 dump truck, several medium size Ford tractors and large size tractors with front end loaders, five John Deere Gators and eight Cushman's.

Favorite feature(s): A good turning radius and automatic transmission.

Cost considerations: Lowest bid.

Dream Truck: Our Dodge 2500, as far as snow plowing capabilities, visibility, hood shape and mirror configurations. **LM**



Gregg Parks favors automatic transmission.

Super truck

Super Lawn has just built a Super Cab truck that will hold up to seven passengers comfortably. They also have a limited number of pre-built trucks available for immediate delivery. Each pre-built truck has the basic Super Lawn Truck system already installed. Also, for the very first time, the company has two used trucks in stock — a 1999 Isuzu NPR with 51,000 miles and a 1997 Isuzu NPR with 41,000 miles. Each truck is equipped with automatic transmission and a/c. For more information contact

www.superlawntruck.com/customers.htm.

Haul Master, Inc.

Product: Huskie HD

Best features:

- Engine — 16 hp, 480cc, overhead valve V-twin, gasoline, four-cycle, cast iron bores, premium long-life bearings and valve train
- Electronic ignition.
- 20 amp alternator with voltage regulator, 30 amp-hour battery.
- Frame — truck style, heavy wall rectangular box and channel section steel with full steel belly pan.
- Fully independent coil spring over heavy duty hydraulic shock absorbers.
- 1,000-lb.+ passenger load capacity.

CheTech

Product: PUG 4x4 utility vehicle

Best features:

- Designed for substantial workloads or challenging terrain.

- Allows all four wheels to maintain contact with the terrain.
- A fully-articulated frame that twists and turns into the center.

Columbia ParCar Corp.

Product: New models of 13 hp and commercial vehicles

Best features:

- The GU2400 Columbia Utilitruck has a 36-in. length bed and 2400-lb. capacity.
- The GU2400XB Columbia Extended Bed Utilitruck features a 60-in. length bed and 2400-lb. capacity.
- The C10G Columbia Tram passenger vehicle seats up to 10 people.