

# industry almanac

NEWS YOU CAN USE

## Kawasaki, LESCO form alliance

GRAND RAPIDS, MI — Kawasaki Motors Corp., USA, has formed an alliance with LESCO, Inc. Through the new venture, LESCO will carry Kawasaki power products as its exclusive hand-held power equipment line in 234 LESCO Service Centers® and 75 LESCO Stores-on-Wheels® throughout the U.S. Selected LESCO locations will also inventory Kawasaki water, trash and semi-trash pumps along with four generator models, while others can special order these products.

## Albizo leaves ANLA

Joel Albizo left the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA) in July to join PlantAmerica, a green industry technology firm. He joined the ANLA in 1988 as director of public relations.

## Griffin markets new fungicide

VALDOSTA, GA — Griffin LLC, a joint venture company of Griffin Corporation and DuPont, will market its own brand of chlorothalonil fungicide, to be sold under the trade name Concorde SST.

## BASF responds to EPA study

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC — As a result of the tolerant reassessment process conducted by the EPA under the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), BASF Agricultural Products has agreed to amend usage patterns for the broad-spectrum fungicide Curalan

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CLIPPINGS

## ABT saga drawing to a close

LAS VEGAS, NV — The saga of the bankruptcy of AgrioBioTech Inc. (ABT) is finally coming to an end, and the U.S. turf seed industry is hoping for more stability.

The bankruptcy court, located in this desert city, sold most of ABT's grass business to a group consisting of former ABT president Kenneth Budd, Dick Olson of Proseed Marketing, Jefferson, OR, and Idaho-based J.R. Simplot Co. The price was \$24.5 million.

As of press time, it wasn't clear how the three parties would split the assets of the failed seed company, but split them they will, sources in Oregon told *Landscape Management*. The new owners reportedly began entertaining offers from other seed companies for certain varieties soon after the announcement was made, the industry source said.

The purchase price, along with the sale of most of ABT's forage business to Research Seeds Inc., should generate about \$60 million. With another \$20 million due from seed inventories and accounts receivables, the court expects to generate \$80 to \$90 million to help pay off farmers and other creditors who took big hits when ABT declared bankruptcy this past January.

David Nelson, of the Oregon Grass Seed Council, said that the resolution of the bankruptcy — along with management of ABT's inventory by experienced seed people — "will help bring stability to the industry and to the market."

ABT, with sales of less than \$1 million in 1992, went on an extended buying spree through the 1990s and bought up over 40 turf and forage seed companies, most of them family-run operations. The company grew to \$200 million in sales by 1999 but ran out of capital and declared bankruptcy this past January. The failure left behind a lot of unhappy farmers and other creditors, and lots of turf seed looking for buyers.

## Ryegrass — what a bargain!

BY RON HALL/  
SENIOR EDITOR

If you purchase large quantities of perennial ryegrass seed — perhaps for overseeding warm-season grasses or for establishing new lawns — you'll love this story.

Perennial ryegrass seed is a bargain this season. While not all varieties are available, it may be a long time before you will see prices this low for many other of your favorite varieties of quality ryegrass seed.

Here are some reasons why:

▶ the large amount of acreage planted for ryegrass turf seed in 1998. The number of acres of perennial ryegrass harvested in



Turf managers will get a ryegrass price break

Oregon rose from 137,750 acres to 186,500 acres from 1995 to 1999. Production rose from 170 million lbs. to 279 million lbs. of seeds in the same period.

▶ the use of the plant growth regulator

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