

LM100

Big 25 Lawn Care Contractors

Some will be more affected by the loss of Dursban than others, but these firms know that the loss of more pesticides looms on the horizon. Still, growth was good this year thanks to the continuing need for their services.

TruGreen-ChemLawn Memphis, TN

This past year TruGreen-ChemLawn acquired Midwest-based Leisure Lawn, ETM in Raleigh, NC, and Professional Turf, Boston, and expects revenues of \$870 million from its lawn services operations, up about 7 percent percent from last year's \$810 million. The national lawn care leader remains on the prowl for more independent operations to add to its service network.

Lawn Doctor Holmdel, NJ

This franchise company, the nation's number two lawn care company, continues to grow. It num-



bered 388 locations in 40 states this season. "We've got the same problem as everybody else, labor," says Frith. "We could have done more work but we didn't have enough people to do. We left money on the table." Even so, Lawn Doctor should exceed \$61 million in

sales this season, up from about \$56 million in 1999, says Frith.

The Weed Man Mississauga, Ontario

The Weed Man made a big move into the United States market in 2000, granting seven "submaster" franchises and expecting to add eight more by year's end. Each of these individuals are working on granting and training several franchise operations within their respective locations. The company's goal is to add 20 to 25 new franchise locations a year for the next several years. The Weed Man, a leader in the Canadian lawn care market for the past 30 years, expects sales in the \$55-\$60 million range this season.

FirstService Corp. Toronto, Canada

Several lawn care companies operate under the FirstService Corp. umbrella, including ChemLawn

Canada which also does business as Sears Lawn Care. Sales for this operation grew about 8% this season to about \$32 million, says William "Bill" Black, CEO and president. ChemLawn Canada offers a range of lawn and landscape services in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and Alberta. About 80% of the company's revenues are derived from its residential accounts, he adds. First-Service subsidiary The Franchise Company also owns a controlling interest in Nutri-Lawn, the lawn care franchise operation with about 50 locations across Canada and at least two in the United States.

Scotts Lawn Service Marysville, OH

Reaching \$21.5 million in revenues in only its third year, this business, headquartered in central Ohio, continues on the fast track. Scotts Lawn Service expects to expand from 12 to 17 corporate locations early in 2001. It also plans to add to the 21 franchise locations. "We are in the acquisition business but it has to be a fit that makes sense and with a company that has a good reputation," says Bill Hoopes, director of development and training. While Scotts Lawn Service is primarily a midwest service provider, look for new stores as far away as northern Virginia.

NaturaLawn of America Frederick, MD

More than a decade ago this company began selling franchises based on the concept of using natural organics and biologicals to beautify lawns, and the strategy has proven to be a solid one. Randy Loeb, vice president, estimates that the company's 50 locations in 23 states will combine for sales exceeding \$20 million in 2000. Look for further expansion of NaturaLawn of America into key markets in the South, Midwest and West.

Spring-Green Corp. Plainfield, IL

With 2000 revenues approaching \$20 million, Spring-Green remains one of the top lawn care franchise operations in the United States. The company, with 65 franchise holders doing business in just over 100 locations, is strongest in the Midwest but has operations in the East, from New Jersey to the Carolinas and several operations in the Pacific Northwest too.

Centex Home Team Lawn Care Dallas, TX

At last count Home Team, a division of the \$5 billion Centex Corp., numbered eight locations. It has a growing presence in Texas, Georgia and Florida and expects to generate \$12.5 million in sales this year. The company made news this summer when it purchased King Green, Inc., Charlie Green's Atlanta operation. President Dave Armitage forecasts \$75 million in annual sales.

Erlich Green Team Reading, Pa

Founded by Julius C. Ehrlich in Reading, PA, in 1928, this company is best known for its professional pest control services. Now operated by the great grandsons of the founder, 6 of the company's 43 local offices now also offer Erlich Green Team lawn and tree services. Although the Ehrlich name is well known in seven Mid-Atlantic states, its Green Team operations are primarily in Pennsylvania. The Green Team anticipates sales of \$10.3 million for the 2000 season, up from \$9.8 million in 1999, says company spokesman John Gibbons.

Middleton Pest Control, Inc. Orlando, FL

The image of a smiling green frog atop a lily pad is familiar to people in central Florida who immediately associate it with Middleton Pest Control,



Inc., one of the biggest pest control/lawn care operations in the Southeast. This company was founded in 1952 and manager Joe Welch says its mission is always to deliver the highest quality service possible. Middleton should generate about \$9.5 million in lawn

care revenue this year, an increase of about 20% over 1999, says Welch.

Massey's Green Up Lawn Maitland, FL

This well-established pest control leader, based in central Florida, also delivers a high-end total care



program to its lawn customers. The most common turf program involves six service calls per year, including an annual aeration. Thirteen of the company's 36 service centers deliver lawn fertilization and pest control. The company expects revenues from this division of the

company to be about \$8.5 million this year.



LM100

continued from page 30

Green Drop Lawns

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

This Rocky Mountain-based operation numbers locations throughout Canada's Prairie Provinces and, this past year, opened its first U.S. operation in Chicago. Owner John Robinson says his company's numbers are private, but acknowledges that it's been growing 10% to 15% annually. It is one of the largest non-franchise application companies in North America.

The Lawn Co. Inc. **South Dennis, MA**

"We're meeting our expectations this year and, generally, our expectations are a little bit high," reported Ed McGuire, owner of this business, based in Cape Cod, MA. McGuire credits a strong spring selling season. "We had one of our better springs for new sales," said McGuire. "It still doesn't compare to the 1980s but it was good. The Lawn Co. expects revenues of about \$7 million this season. The company is outgrowing its quarters and is planning on a new building for 2001.

Prograss, Inc. **Wilsonville, OR**

This progressive Green Industry operation is reporting 10% growth this season and should reach \$11 million in sales. Focusing mostly on the residential market, 22-year-old Prograss provides a full range of turf, landscape and tree care services. Its 150 employees service customers in and around Portland and Eugene, OR, and also in Seattle and Concord, CA.

Senske Lawn and Tree Care, **Kennewick, WA**

In eastern Washington and parts of Idaho and western Montana, this company is a top Green Industry service provider. Its divisions — lawn care,



weed control, trees, pest control, grounds maintenance — should generate about \$10 million in total sales, says president Chris Senske. The company, which employs about 200, grew 9% this season, he said.

Swingle Tree & Landscape Care **Denver, CO**



Although the season was exceptionally dry in the Denver market, the demand for professional lawn and tree services continued to climb, and this quality company — for the second time in recent years — had to turn down work in June. "We just didn't have enough employees," says president

Tom Tolkacz, "and we won't take on work unless we can provide quality service." Swingle should top \$9 million in sales this season with about \$2 million coming from traditional lawn care services. About 85% of the company's revenues come from residential services.

Agro Lawn Systems Inc. **Vienna, VA**

Keeping up the growth in northern Virginia has been a tall order for service companies, and this 26-year-old lawn care company is no exception. President Tom Speirs says his company should record sales of about \$2.9 million. "With all the rain we've had, almost everybody's lawn looks good, those that have been cared for and those that haven't, so we're not expecting a strong fall selling season," says Speirs. Even so, new construction in his marketplace is putting a charge into his company's landscape division.

Masters Green Inc. **Sterling Heights, MI**

This company's two locations serving the Detroit area will produce about \$3.1 million in lawn care sales this season. "We have to continue to grow to stay profitable," says President Paul Wagner. A cool, wet summer through August kept the lawns in southeastern Michigan green and lush, and Wagner was looking for a strong fall selling season. "The better our lawns look, the better are company looks," he said.

Lawn Medic, Inc. **Bergen, NY**

This company, founded in 1969, is smaller than it once was but it's still a healthy and respected organization with between 25-30 company and licensed franchised operations in six states, most in the Northeast but some in the Midwest. President Don Burton says the company's financial information is private, but Lawn Medic sales exceed \$2 million system wide.

Lawn Master Inc. **Pensacola, FL**

This quality lawn care operation has been taking care of Pensacola's predominantly centipedegrass and St. Augustine lawns for 20 years now. President Joe Williams reports the area suffered a horrendous drought through most of the season and was still about 20 in. short of the rain it usually receives for the year. Even so, Williams expects an 8% to 10% growth in revenues from 1999's 2.4 million.

Southern Lawns, Inc. **Montgomery, AL**

In spite of a drought that lasted well into summer, Southern Lawns, Inc., with locations in Montgomery, AL, and Columbus, GA, will generate \$1.5 to \$2 million in sales, predicts James Bartley, general manager. Bartley has been running this quality company since its founding 23 years ago. It specializes in keeping this city's hybrid bermudagrass lawns green and healthy.

All America Turf Beauty Inc. **Van Meter, IA**

With sales of just over \$2 million in 2000, All America Turf Beauty remains one of the top independent lawn care providers in the Midwest. President Daryl Johnson says one of his company's goals has been to grow the application business by 10% annually and this year it will meet that goal even though other areas of the company, like Christmas Décor, are growing faster.

Fairway Green Inc. **Belle Mead, NJ**

This family owned and operated company founded by Robert Windish in 1987 will generate sales of \$2.2 million this season, he says. Fairway Green markets "environmentally conscious" lawn care. "We treat each lawn on an individual basis. There are situations where you can treat on as-needed basis, and some that you can't," says Windish from his central New Jersey location.

One Step Tree & Lawncare **North Chili, NY**

The regulatory climate remains unsettled for lawn care operators in the State of New York, but customers of this 25-year-old operation insist upon lawn service. Last season, they boosted One Step sales to \$2.1 million, and owner/operator Bob Ottley says he's budgeting a 10% increase in revenues for this season for his 22-person operation.

Heritage Lawns **Plainfield, CT**

President James Leszuk says he not actively seeking to expand, but he won't turn down opportunities to grow his business in different markets if they present themselves. Headquartered near Hartford, Leszuk oversees operations near Springfield, MA, and is expanding another location in the Boston area. With sales of \$1.5 million this season, Leszuk, who sees irrigation as a bigger part of his services, is looking at double-digit growth next season.

