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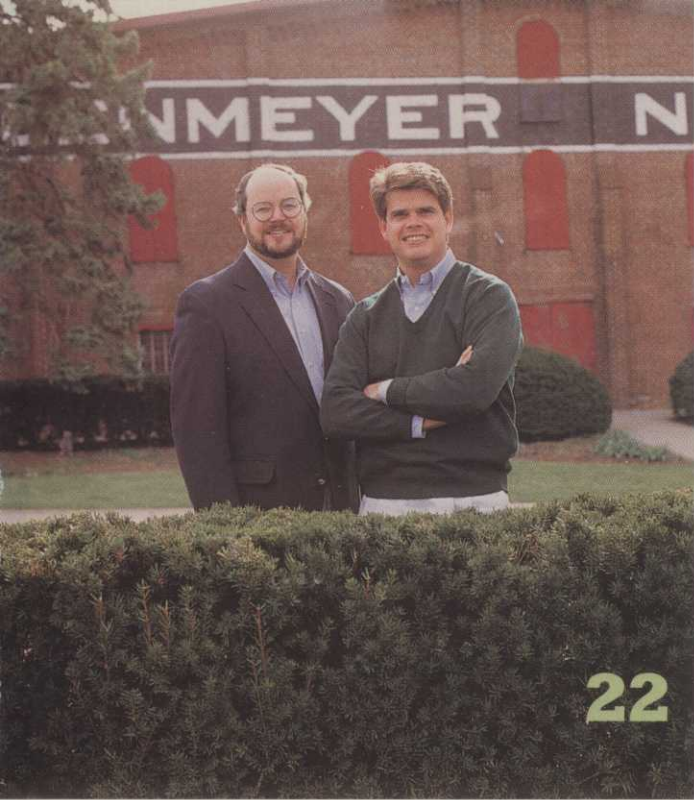
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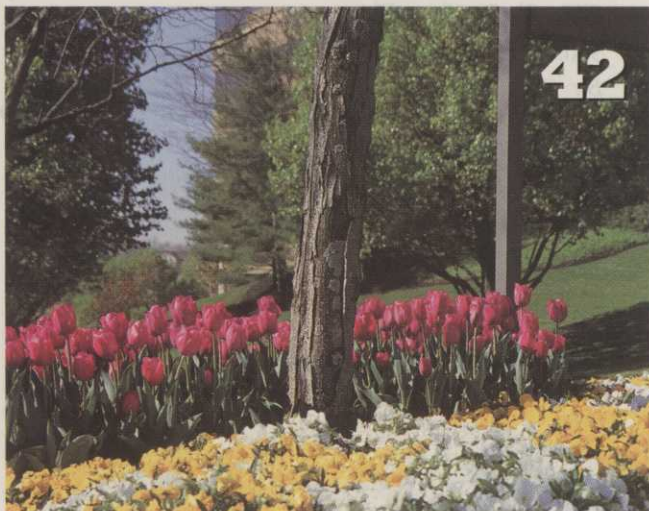
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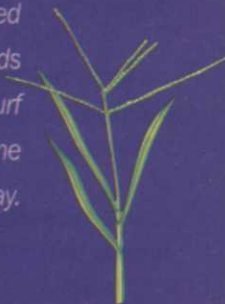
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events

WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

June

21-23 OPEI Annual Meeting

Ponte Vedra, FL; 512/442-1788

26-27 1st Annual Pennsylvania Snow Removal Conference / Reading, PA;

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28 Scouting for Pests and Problems of Woody Ornamentals in the Landscape / Amherst, MA;

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July

10 University of Missouri-Columbia Turfgrass Field Day

Columbia, MO; 573-442-4893

12-15 ANLA Convention & Executive Learning Retreat / Cleveland, OH; 202/789-5980x3010

14 MFPA Tree Identification Workshop / Lansing, MI;

517/482-5530

15-17 Texas Turfgrass Summer Institute / Austin, TX; 979/690-2201

16-17 PLCAA's Legislative Day on the Hill & Arlington Renewal Project / Washington, DC; 800/458-3466;

18-22 Turfgrass Producers International Summer Convention and Field Day / Toronto, Canada; 800/405-8873

20-22 EXPO 2001 / Louisville, KY; 800/558-8767

24-27 California Association of Nurserymen 91st Annual Meeting / Monterey, CA; 800/748-6214

31 Midwest Regional Turf Field Day / West Lafayette, IN; 765/494-8039

August

3-5 Southern Nursery Association 2001 / Atlanta, GA; 770/953-3311

4-8 Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Meeting / Myrtle Beach, SC; 515/289-2331

14-23 International Growers' Tour / Germany/Denmark; www.anla.org

15-19 ANLA Landscape Operations Tour / Dallas, TX; www.anla.org

17-19 ALCA Design/Build Workshop / Atlanta, GA; 800/395-2522

19-25 International Garden Centre Tour / NY/Baltimore; 202/789-5980, ext. 3010

21 Cornell University Field Day / Ithaca, NY; 800/873-8873

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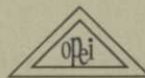
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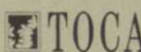
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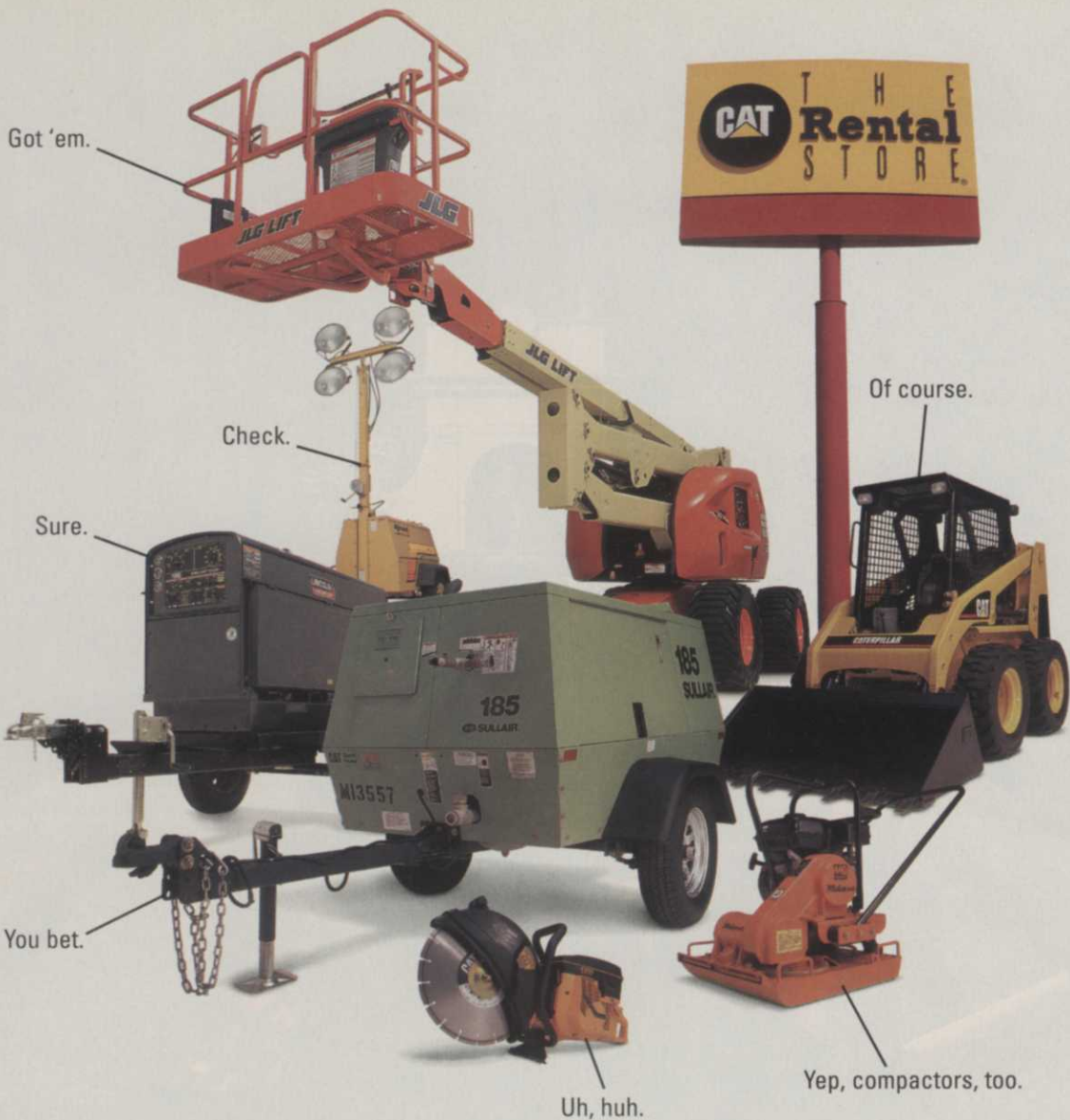
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Have a Plan B, just in case

Every time I hear a news story on the stock market, I think about sheep and how mindlessly they stampede together. We see this same effect when stockholders buy and sell in great waves generated by the slightest event. Often, these buying-selling waves make no sense at all, but thousands of people participate. It's one of those mysterious things driving our economy.

Economists are the opposite of sheep. It seems each one has his or her theory of impending boom or disaster, and a full set of reasons why they're right. Some predict our troubles are over, others say the economy will continue to wobble, and still more wonder if things will really tank later this year.

Why the confusion? The "leading economic indicators" economists use to measure the economy's performance are giving us mixed signals every month. And because economists use models based on past markets to make their forecasts, they don't have a clear picture of how this market will act. Their crystal balls are all fogged up.

I'm not comfortable accepting anyone's prediction yet, and neither should you be.

Like many of your peers interviewed in our news story on page 15, you may be having a strong year, with plenty of work, advance orders and customer renewals. "What recession?" you ask. Or maybe you're only feeling a slight pinch from higher prices and only sense a slowing momentum. How are you to plan?

Because the jury's still out, I hope you have a Plan B in mind. You can't control the forces moving this economy on a national or local scale, but you can be prepared. Here's how to recession-proof your organization:

1. Develop a clear vision of your services, your cus-

tomers and your goals. That's your business plan. If you're an in-house operation, define the value you provide, in case you have to defend your budget someday.

2. Target your weak spots (having only a few big customers, not being profitable enough, having too many competitors, struggling with weak cash flow, etc.). Then, plan immediate steps to rectify them and strengthen your market position. This may lead you to some new ways to stand out from your competition, add or delete services, or reorganize your operations.

3. Picture an actual recession, losing key customers or having your own costs skyrocket. Make it a worst-case scenario. How will you weather that storm? Then you can prepare a specific, targeted defensive plan, before you need one. You might get some ideas from our cover story on page 22.

This industry may feel the downturns last, but by looking at your operation now, you have the time to make it stronger, just in case.

Contact Sue at 440/891-2729
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Economists don't have a clear picture of how this market will act. Their crystal balls are all fogged up.

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Circle No. 107 on Reader Inquiry Card

A tale of two ponds

Landscape ponds are the rage in my community. Most are of the design-and-build-yourself variety. Dig a hole, put down a liner, fill it with water, insert plants and fish — instant pond. I built one of these myself. It was 6 by 6 ft., and 3 ft. deep in the middle so that our fish, our frog and our water lilies would survive our northern Ohio winters.

My wife, Vicky, and I loved that pond. I say *loved* because this past winter it sprung a leak. Sunlight apparently caused the poly liner to weaken, and it cracked about a foot from the bottom. The carnage was awful — two koi, four goldfish and our frog.

It's all my fault, my wife Vicky tells me. I should have used a rubber liner. Or, I should have covered the poly liner with stones when I built the pond, like she said. Now, she's pressuring me to find a new home for our five surviving goldfish. They've been circling in a 25-gallon plastic pail located under a downspout on the north side of our house since early spring. Vicky says they're not happy there. How can she tell?

We considered repairing our pond — that is until I told her about a professionally installed pond in neighboring Catawba Island, OH. That was probably a mistake. When she sees that one, she's not going to want to repairs ours.

Casey Enders of Choice Lawn Care, Republic, OH, designed and installed the 11-17 ft. pond last season on the property of David and Marianne Glasser.

Homeowner David said that he'd originally talked to Enders about installing a smaller water feature just behind his home, but Enders persuaded him to go with the larger pond — waterfall, koi and aquatic plants — because of the lay of the property.

We considered repairing our pond — that is until I told her about a professionally installed pond in neighboring Catawba Island



Dave Glasser says that his new landscape pond requires more maintenance than he anticipated, but it's worth it.

The evening that I visited the Glassers, they were sharing a bottle of wine with friends on the deck behind their home. They spend as many pleasant evenings there as the mosquitoes will allow, and greatly enjoy the beauty and quiet sounds of the moving water, which is their landscape's showcase feature.

Since I told Vicky about the Glasser's pond, she's been all over me to see it. How much longer can I hold out? Every time she sees the goldfish in the pail she asks me when I'm going to take her to see it.

Contact Ron at 440/891-2636 or e-mail at rhall@advanstar.com



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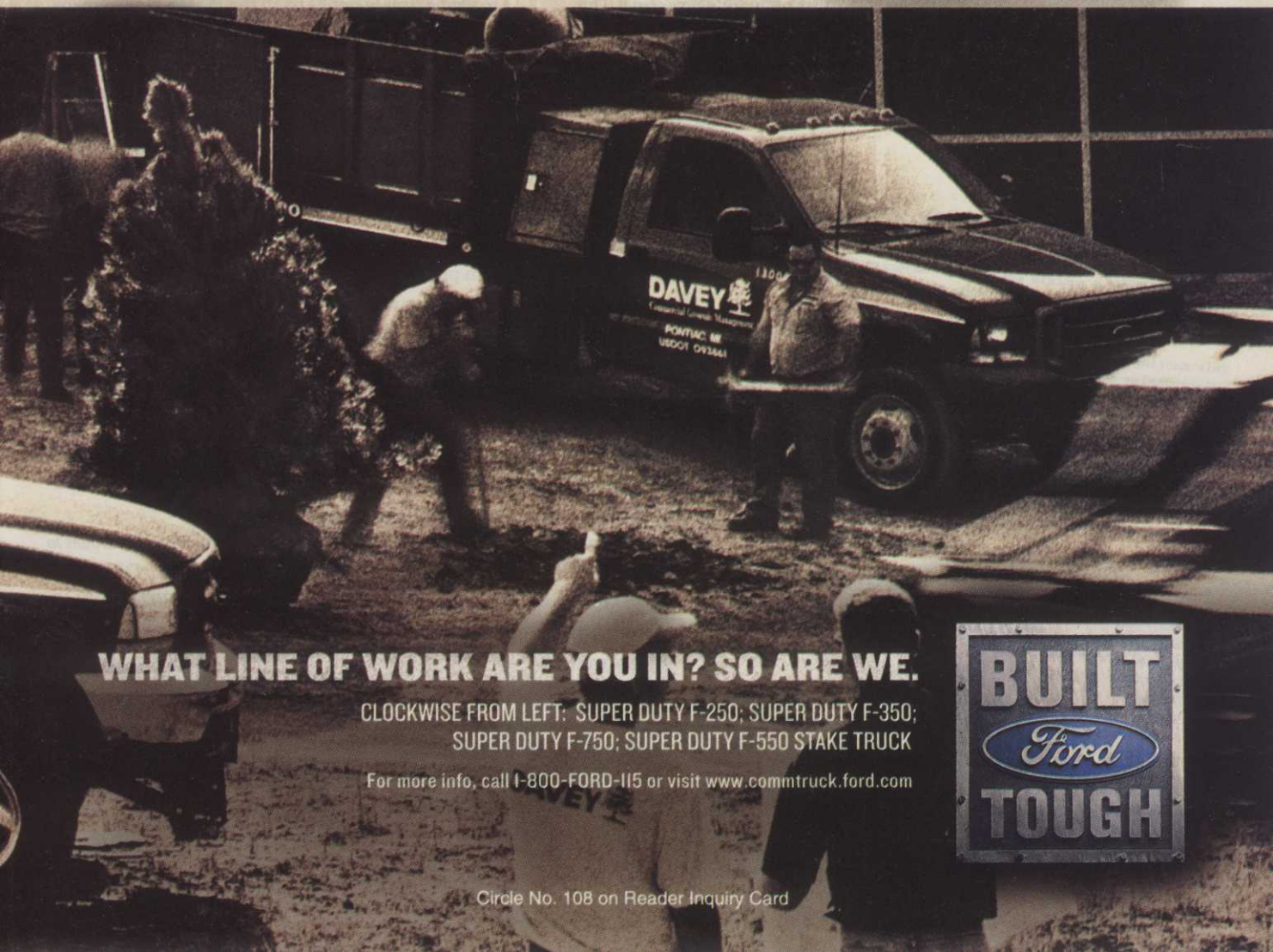


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BY LARRY IORII / GUEST COLUMNIST

I gained more practical information at my networking meeting than at any other event I've ever attended.



Come over to my place

If you want to learn a lot of useful information that you can use in your company, hold a meeting. It's as simple as opening your home or business for an evening to a group of local competitors. Last year, I held my first networking meeting. This year, I hosted two.

In my case, I organized it for local branch members of the Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS).

The meeting was designed to gather information I couldn't get at traditional conferences. I think it worked great. I've attended local, regional and national conferences for 25 years, but I can say without

a doubt I gained more practical information during the two or three hours my meeting took than during any other event I've ever attended.

How to get started

I mailed a simple notice to all the PGMS branch members, suggesting possible discussion topics. My flyer invited them to "open up" and share information. We then had an informal gathering at my house, complete with favorite local foods.

The two meetings I've held so far were overwhelming successes, probably because everyone was eager to trade information. Once the guests arrived, I handed them a form listing all the discussion topics and let them pick five.

Each discussion group split up into a separate room in my house. Every half hour, guests rotated to a different room to discuss a different topic or the original one.

During the rest of last year, owners and key employees who had attended the meetings continued to thank me for having such a useful gathering. Many competitors got to know each other better and established better ties by trading information.

— *The author owns and operates Down to Earth Inc., a landscape firm in Wilmington, DE. He can be reached at 302/654-8113.*

Larry Iorii sent this letter to PGMS branch members inviting them to a networking meeting. Copying this format will be helpful to you when you decide to hold your own meeting.

Dear PGMS member:

Due to a positive response from last year's meeting, it's obvious we have many mutual topics to discuss and not enough time. It's also apparent we share many of the same concerns and problems. That meeting was a success because the majority of owners and key employees opened up and shared their practical experiences, concerns, successes and failures.

This meeting's objective: To encourage networking and build relationships between old and new members in an informal setting.

Dinner: Pizza, subs, steak sandwiches, beverages and, of course, desserts.

Cost: No cost (defrayed by sponsors)

Sponsors: I need two at \$___ each per meeting

Meeting 1: Tuesday, Jan. 16 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting 2: Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 6:00 p.m.

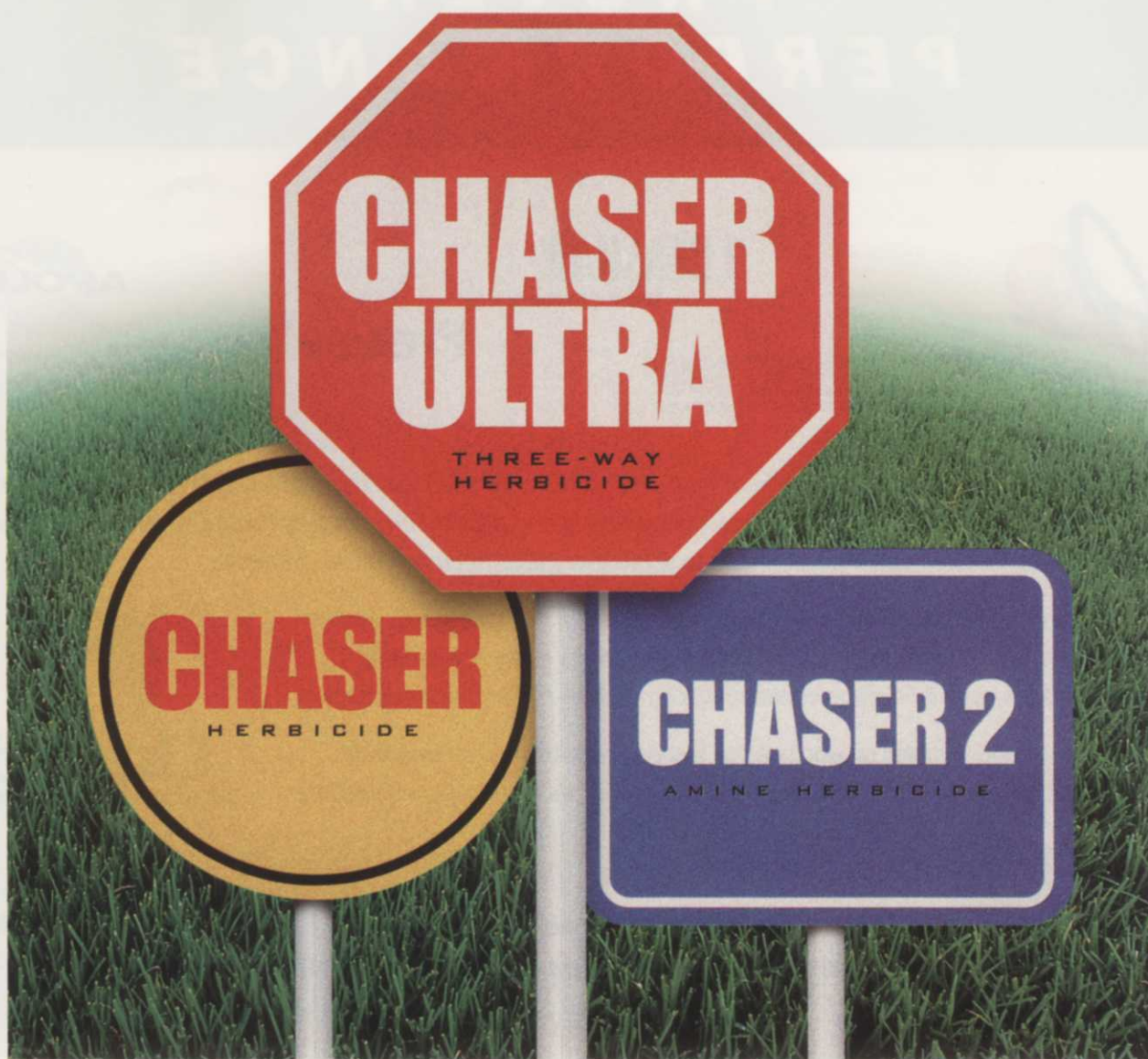
Location: My house, Wilmington, DE

Possible topics (majority vote will select five main topics)

- ▶ Pricing
- ▶ Sources for annuals, perennials, evergreen trees, deciduous trees, etc.
- ▶ Cell phone alternatives and communication/electronic devices
- ▶ Specialty services we can offer each other
- ▶ Insurance (business and health)
- ▶ Employee sources, wages, benefits
- ▶ Snow plowing pricing and concerns
- ▶ Equipment repair, new machines
- ▶ Investments and profit sharing
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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Companies bid for Aventis Biotech

LONDON — Aventis has narrowed the list of potential buyers of its agrochemical division, CropScience, down to German companies BASF and Bayer and U.S.-based Dow Chemical.

Bayer revenues exceed \$10 billion

PITTSBURGH, PA — Pittsburgh-based Bayer reported a 13.6% increase in sales to \$10.1 billion for 2000. This is the first time the company achieved revenues exceeding \$10 billion. Earnings were also higher as after-tax profits rose 32% to \$202 million.

Oyler resigns from U.S. Lawns

CALABASAS, CA — Thomas Oyler resigned as president of U.S. Lawns (USL), the franchise landscape maintenance company he founded in 1986 and sold 10 years later to Environmental Industries (EII). Burton Sperber, CEO of EII, said that Ken Hutcheson, USL vice president of marketing, would assume additional responsibilities as general manager of USL.

McGinnis Farms has new name

MOLINE, IL — Deere & Company announced that McGinnis Farms, Inc., its recently acquired wholly owned subsidiary headquartered in Alpharetta, GA, is changing its name to John Deere Landscapes.

continued on page 16

Recession? What recession?

Busy as ever, Green Industry pros find talk of economic slowdown laughable

BY JASON STAHL

If you want to give Marty Grunder's crew a good laugh, he suggests you tell them the economy is slowing down. Grunder, owner and president of Grunder Landscaping Co., Dayton, OH, says his crews are as busy as they've ever been despite talk of an economic slowdown.

"Our sales are \$100,000 higher than they were last year, and our backlog is the same, too," Grunder says. "We have three large projects we're working on right now, and if they come through, we'll have a record year."

Grunder says he feels his company, which grossed \$2.4 million last year and handles a lot of high-end residential accounts, can stand up to tough economic times better than a company that does primarily commercial work. "Most of our residential clients have a combined gross income of \$200,000, so even if they take a little hit, they're still not going to cut their own grass. Their prize possession is their home."

Jim Campanella, owner of The Lawn Dawg, Hudson, NH, says his company is behind where it wants to be this year, but it has nothing to do with the economy. "We've been trying to sell lawn care over the last two

months with snow on the ground," he says.

Still, he says his company is up 44% over last year and has had record sales over the last couple weeks in April due to rising temperatures. He's doubled Lawn Dawg's business every year since he started five years ago, and he expects the same this year with projected revenues of \$3.3 million.

Rene West, president of Executive Landscaping, Pensacola, FL, says new residential installations are down slightly. In fact, his overall business is down in the first quarter. But he expects a better second quarter for his company, which grossed \$2.7 million last year and has already sold \$1.8 million this year.

Most of the maintenance work Total Landscape, St. Louis, MO, handles is for commercial properties, not expensive homes. Still, times are good. "We haven't

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[CLIPPINGS]

INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Here's where some landscape and lawn companies' revenues stand so far this year compared to last:

Custom Lawn Care & Landscaping, Washington

Court House, OH	+30%
Allentuck Landscaping, Gaithersburg, MD	+12%
Raymond Brothers Landscaping, Hillsdale, NJ	+15%
Beebe Landscape Services, East Windsor, CT	+10-15%
Summer Rain, Margate, FL	+15-20%
Joyce Landscaping, Marston's Mills, MA	+20%
Four Square Landscaping, Dallas, TX	+20%
Landscape Images, New Orleans, LA	+15%

industry almanac

continued from page 15

"This name change allows us to create a larger vision of what John Deere Landscapes will become," said John Jenkins, president of the Worldwide Commercial and Consumer Equipment Division. "Instead of serving just regional markets, John Deere Landscapes aspires to become a national supplier of products and services."

DuPont withdraws Benlate

WILMINGTON, DE — DuPont announced that by the end of this year, it will stop selling the fungicide Benlate. On the market for 33 years, Benlate's been criticized as a health risk. DuPont cited high legal costs for its decision.

Lesco reports drop in net sales

STRONGSVILLE, OH — Lesco, Inc. reported that first quarter net sales were down 8.3% compared to last year. The company said the drop in sales was due to a late spring over the northern two-thirds of the country, a severe drought in Florida and an increase in costs. For 2001, the company said it believes it will be able to report higher earnings than last year because of an increased presence in stores and a rebound in sales growth due to normal weather patterns.

PLCAA Day on the Hill deadline nears

MARIETTA, GA — Don't forget to sign up for PLCAA's 12th Annual Legislative Day on the Hill by June 29! Hotel reservations must be made by June 22. Contact PLCAA at 800/458-3466.

[CLIPPINGS]

continued from page 15

had to seek out commercial contracts because they've been just falling in our lap," owner Bob Franey says.

Franey is on target to reach the \$2 million mark this year, which would be an 18% increase over last year. His average installation sale is up 30%. "People are buying more jobs, and bigger jobs," he says. Despite talk of a sour economy, he decided to push water features this year, and so far his decision was a smart one — he's sold ten valued from \$14,000 to \$20,000.

One word of caution comes from Bob Smart, owner of Yard Smart, Olmsted

Falls, OH. "Everyone needs to remember that, when a recession hits, we're usually the last industry to slow down and the last to get going again," he says.

OMISSION

In the May issue of Landscape Management, the first page of the article entitled, "Managing Diseases," was omitted. We regret the error. Go to www.landscapemanagement.net to read the article in its entirety.

WHAT DO YOU BUY?

LM survey respondents who buy:

One or more (net)	38%
Seeding equipment	13%
Large skid-steer loaders	13%
Front-end loaders	12%
Backhoes	7%
Tree planting equipment	6%
Trenchers/vibratory plows	6%
Mini skid-steer loaders	5%
Mechanized graders	2%
Articulated units	1%
Other	6%

(SOURCE: LM 2000 SURVEY)

People & companies

The **J.R. Simplot Company's** Turf and Horticulture Group named **Hironi Yanagisawa** vice



president and general manager of its newly created International division.

The **Evergreen Foundation's** Board of Directors recently expanded with the addition of John Deere's **Bill Klutho** and Aquatrols' **Demie Moore**.

Yazoo/Kees Power Equipment named **Bob Morgan** sales manager.

ProSource One named **Brad Boroughs** turf representative in the Texas market, **David Aughter** vegetation management representative in Minnesota, and **Jennifer Smith** ornamental sales representative in the South Central Turf & Ornamental market.

Becker Underwood

promoted **John Walther** to national accounts manager and **Mike Sherman** to business development manager. The company also hired **Wally Boilek** as national accounts manager.





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Landscape Management, Golfdom, Turfgrass Trends win 17 TOCA awards

PHOENIX, AZ — The Advanstar Landscape Group collected 17 national Turf & Ornamental Communicators Association (TOCA) awards at the organization's annual meeting held here last month.

Landscape Management won six awards, including firsts for senior editor Ron Hall, managing editor Jason Stahl and associate publisher/executive editor Sue Gibson as

well as merits for the entire staff. Senior graphic designer Jeff Landis also collected a first for *TurfGrass Trends*. *Landscape Management's* sister publication, *Golfdom*, won 10 editorial and design awards, including firsts for Larry Aylward, Frank Andorka and Lisa Lehman as well as merit awards for Pat Jones, Kim Traum, Lisa Bodnar, Frank Andorka and Larry Aylward.

In all, the group won 17 out of the 29 editorial and design awards for commercial publications.

"Although we've been honored to win many TOCA awards in the past, we're serious about constantly improving *Landscape Management*," Gibson said. "We believe one way to measure our progress is in professional awards programs like this one. That we've one several awards this year, against many worthy competitors, is a positive statement about our efforts and the professionalism of our staff."



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along with detailed product descriptions of Oly-Ola round top and low profile landscape edgings. For a free catalog contact Oly-Ola Sales, Inc. at 800/334-4647 or visit www.olyola.com.

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Scotts goes West

MARYSVILLE, OH — Scotts Lawn Care expanded westward by acquiring Chicago-based Liqui-Green in May and the lawn, shrub and tree business of Northern Lawns, Omaha, NB. Mark Long, vice president Scotts Lawn Service, said Liqui-Green's six Chicago-area locations will be absorbed into Scotts' three branches. Scotts will also be franchisor for Liqui-Green's franchise locations. Regarding Northern Lawns, 21-year owner Dale Amstutz will stay on through early summer to help with the transition. In recent months, Scotts also acquired Green Valley, Kansas City, KS, and the lawn application business of Munie Outdoor Services, St. Louis, MO.

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BY GEORGE WITTERSCHEIN/
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Ask around about the possibility of a recession and you'll get differing answers. But ask around about what Green Industry companies should do to get ready for an economic downturn and you'll find surprising unanimity.

Years of experience

Stephen Hillenmeyer, president of Hillenmeyer Nurseries, Lexington, KY, surveys the economy from a position of long corporate and family experience. He is the fifth generation of Hillenmeyers to manage a company that dates back to 1841. The business expects gross revenues of \$7 million this year, and employs between 100 and 150 depending on the season.

While Hillenmeyer doesn't see a recession right now, he feels landscape and allied companies should always remain alert to the possibility of business downturns.

"Fortunately, we're not seeing big swings in our business right now," Hillenmeyer says. "Some of our customers cut

PHOTO: ERIC OF WISCONSIN & SCAG

back a little bit last year on our services, but this year their appetite is rebounding and, if anything, they're ordering more from us.

"One of our commercial customers who cut back apparently caught flak from their employees, who complained that their grounds no longer looked as good as they tradi-

"My number one recommendation for preparing for a recession is to clean up your act now in terms of running your operations well."

— Stephen Hillenmeyer

tionally had. They have resumed ordering substantial services with us."

The lack of big swings in profits is fine with Hillenmeyer. "We like to stay on a tried and steady course," he says. "We have been just moving along, growing a little bit at a time, and we haven't been chasing huge growth every year.

"We prefer modest and steady increases of five, six and

ten percent a year if possible."

After a 160 years, Hillenmeyer Nurseries has learned to deal with a fluctuating economy. "I think we have had enough experience to have learned that times are not always going to be easy," he says. "So we try to run the operation as lean and mean as we can all the time. If we do it that way, we don't have to cut back when times get slow."

One typical move many companies make to counter an economic slowdown is to let employees go. Hillenmeyer does just the opposite: He invests even more in his existing good people.

"Our industry is all about people," he says. "And if you don't have the quality people to maintain the level of what you're selling out there, it can come back to haunt you. You lose a few people and all of a sudden you wonder how you're going to perform quality work. And then maybe any new people that you bring in don't have the culture you just lost.

"We try to keep in mind that the good people already have jobs, so the likelihood that I'm going to get rid of 'x' amount of people and replace them with really good people is very small. It's just not realistic. Those good ones are already gone, and we'd just be trading down with new people.

"If we do invest in our peo-



Brothers Chris (left) and Steve Hillenmeyer believe the key to handling a recession well is to operate efficiently at all times.

ple, hopefully we'll reduce our turnover and that will help us control our costs. Therefore, one way to prepare for a recession is to cut down turnover."

Although Hillenmeyer shoots for 5 to 6% growth in the worst times and 10%-plus in the best times, he admits that sometimes it's been 5 to 6% in the best times and that the company has even lost money in the worst times.

"That's why we've raised our business performance standard," he says. "So my number one recommendation for preparing for a recession is to clean up your act now in terms of running your operations efficiently and well."

Diversification is key

We heard similar observations from John Bass of Lawn Master Inc. in West Jordan, UT, a U.S. Lawns franchise with annual revenues of \$400,000 and a maximum workforce of 25 people.

Like Hillenmeyer, Bass isn't feeling the effects of a recession on his business right now, mainly because his business is diversified into three areas: chemical applications, Christmas decorations and some landscape maintenance.

Bass finds that his commercial customers, regardless of the economy, still want their properties to look good. "They have to keep up appearances," Bass

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says. "I heard a speaker at a recent conference say that as apartment houses and office buildings get vacancies they cannot fill, they tend to spend more money getting the property to look nice than when they're totally filled up. Oddly, when their space is totally full, they tend to cut back."

Nonetheless, Bass does not believe that his business is bul-

letproof. "It will be interesting to see how our spraying business does, because that business is based on expendable income from residential customers."

Already, Bass has seen one classic sign of recession — price increases. "Our utility bills went up about \$1,200 annualized, which is \$1,200 coming out of my budget now that is not replaceable," he says. If his

own utility bills have gone up, the same will happen to his customers, possibly affecting their ability/willingness to buy his services.

The rise in Bass's utility bills appears to be a spinoff from the California power crisis.

"We're located in the West," he says. "In addition to our utility costs, fertilizer prices have almost doubled from last year because it's more profitable for suppliers to sell natural gas instead of use it to make fertilizer. By mid-summer, we may have availability problems."

Good cuts, bad cuts

With 18 years of business experience, Bass has some clear ideas about how to recession-proof a Green Industry business. "One thing to do is evaluate your cash flow to see how a decrease in sales would affect you," he says. "Then, if an economic downturn happens, you know where to make good cuts."

The distinction between good cuts and bad cuts is important to Bass. "A bad cut will make it harder for you to recover afterward. A good cut may save you some money and won't cripple you in the future. You've also got to push sales harder than ever.

"If you have excess equipment like a truck or tank or mowers, that's okay in normal times. Sometimes we keep those for spares. But if you wait and the economy declines,

there will be no market in which to sell them. So you may want to sell those right away."

Bass doesn't believe you should shed employees like extra equipment, though, even if the purpose of doing so is to enable them to find other jobs while the labor market is still decent.

"In theory, that would be a kind thing to do," Bass says. "But you also don't want to cut jobs prematurely. Given how much you have invested in your employees, it's something you don't want to do until you have to."

An alternative to laying people off is cutting back on hours. "If the need arises, go to the whole group and explain to them that things are down and you don't have work for everybody. Then ask, 'Rather than laying somebody off, will everyone agree to work 36 hours instead of 40?'"

Overall, Bass isn't worried. He believes that by taking reasonable precautions, he will be able to ride out a potential recession. He does have a warning, though: "I think that poorly managed businesses will probably fail in a serious recession. On the other hand, the companies that are ready will actually come out stronger after any recession." **LJM**

— The author is a contributing editor based in Mendham, N.J.


3 recession-proofing steps

John Bass, owner of Lawn Master Inc., West Jordan, UT, thinks recession proofing your business starts with early preparation. "The fundamental thing is to get ready so that you're not a victim," he says. Here are some specific examples of what he means:

- If you need credit, get it now. Credit may not be available if a recession develops and gets worse.
- Get your house in order. That way, if you're going to borrow money, you can do it now while interest rates are low.
- Raise prices if you must, but do it judiciously.

"When cost increases come down the pike, you have to pass them on," Bass says. "If you take those increases from your profits, you'll soon be out of business. We're doing some market research right now. Based on fertilizer, we already know we *should* raise our prices 5%, but will the market bear that? Maybe we can only get half of that increase, but we have to do something."

—JB



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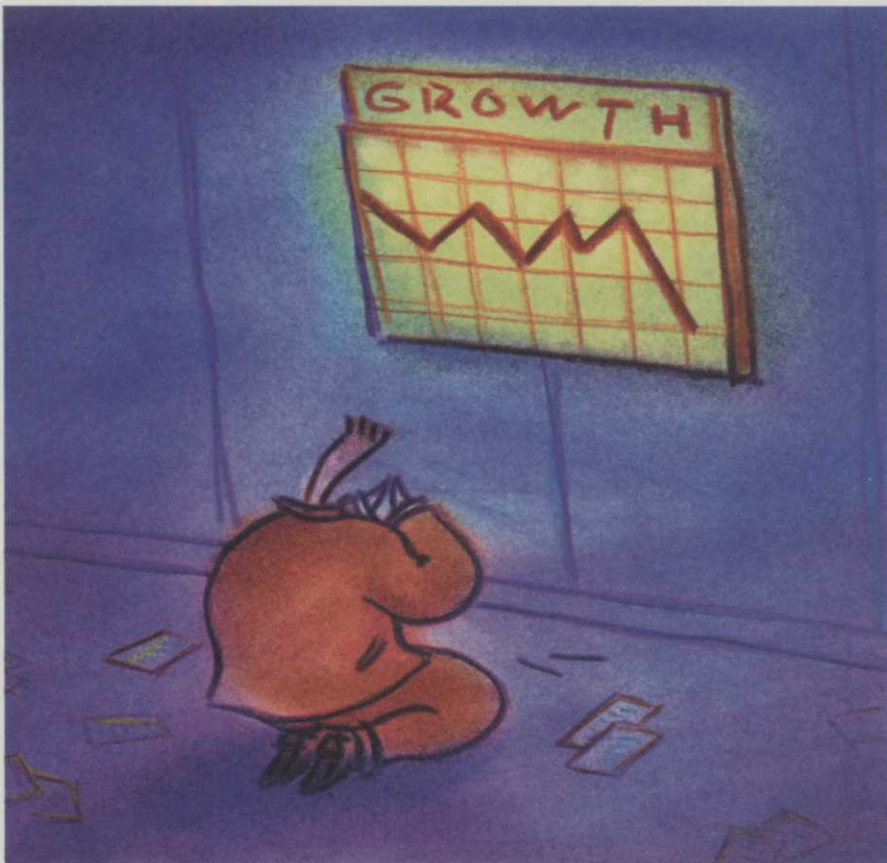
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Recession? It may be here already

ARTVILLE



BY GEORGE WITTERSCHEIN/ CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Who better to tell us whether we're in a recession or not than an economic consultant? We asked Gary Shilling, and here's what he had to say:

Landscape Management: Our readers are sending us mixed signals about whether they see the landscape industry in recession

or not. You're convinced that if we aren't in one already, the United States economy will be in recession soon? That's a pretty bold statement.

Shilling: Several things lead me to believe we're already in one. If you look around, you've got all the classic signs of a recession.

✓ **Inventories are out of control.** That's always the first primary cause of a recession. Despite our progress into more of a

low-inventory service economy, the role of inventories in recessions is still a major one. As a matter of fact, in the last two recessions, inventories accounted for an increasing share of the decline in real GDP (i.e. the total economy).

✓ **Confidence is declining.** There's been a collapse in consumer confidence, CEO confidence and small business confidence.

✓ **Productivity growth problems.** Productivity growth declined in the fourth quarter. I'm a long-term bull on productivity, but in the short-run, when you get the disruptive effects of companies cutting down on business activity, productivity suffers and labor costs rise. In the fourth quarter, unit labor costs were up 4.1% annualized while productivity was up 2.4%. This is the reverse of what we had been seeing when the economy was booming.

✓ **Capital spending is starting to ease off.** "New tech" has found they don't live in their own world. They can't prosper by taking in each other's laundry. They've got to sell their wares, ultimately, to consumers and to "old tech." So "new tech" finds itself getting pulled down as well. As profits decline and capacity grows, capital spending gets cut back, and that hurts productivity.

These are all classic signs of a recession. When you look behind the signs for causes, you find many economic forces in place that tend to cause recession, like:

✓ **The delayed effects of the Federal Reserve tightening.** It takes a year for the effect of the Federal Reserve tightening interest rates to work through the system. The last tightening — one-half of a per-

continued on page 30

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Landscape Attachments

continued from page 26

centage point — occurred in May of 2000, so we have a while yet before we get past

that event and into the salutary effects of the Fed's recent easing of interest rates.

Fortify your balance sheet now

Landscape Management: *If we're going to be in a recession through the end of the year, what should people in a business like landscaping do?*

Shilling: Cut back spending that isn't absolutely essential. Shed employees while there's still a relatively tight labor market in which they can find jobs. Unemployment is what we call a "lagging series." It's only when we are well into a recession that business gets around to cutting payrolls, so beat the competition to the punch and cut back on your payrolls while your people can still find jobs and you're not going to feel upset that you're throwing them out when they have no place to go.

Also, build a fortress-like balance sheet. Look at what is essential in your business and what isn't. We've had so many "McMansions" (a derisory term for large, showy homes built in recent years as a spillover from Wall Street money), and my forecast is that they'll go the way of all flesh. There was a lot of work for landscape professionals on those lots, and those kinds of contracts will fade fast.

If I were a landscape professional, I'd be looking for more basic kinds of things, maybe "small luxuries." When times are tough, people still want to treat themselves. They might opt to have a seasonal flower bed installed as opposed to a bigger landscape job.

If you can do these "small luxuries" in volume, you can still make some money.

— *A. Gary Shilling is the president of A. Gary Shilling & Company, an economic consulting and investment advisory firm based in Springfield, NJ (973-467-0070; shil@ix.netcom.com).*

He has served as chief economist at Merrill Lynch, written books and magazine articles, and is a frequent guest on national television programs as well as a regular columnist for Forbes magazine. Shilling is widely regarded as one of Wall Street's leading economist-prognosticators.

Less lending. About a year ago, the Fed told banks, "you're being too easy on loans," so the banks cut back on lending. Now that they're starting to see loan losses, they're really getting stringent. A recent Fed report shows a huge increase in the number of banks cutting back on credit availability, and a huge decline in loan demand. People who need loans are being hung out to dry because banks have gotten some big loan losses and others don't want to borrow.

✓ **Energy cost increases.**

These take about a year to work through the system, too. Outside of California, utilities that generate electricity with, say, natural gas, typically have a combination buying philosophy that includes a mixture of long-term contracts and buying on-the-spot markets. As those long-term contracts run out, the utilities are renewing at higher prices and passing those right through to consumers. That means we'll get a delayed effect from the increase in natural gas prices.

✓ **Uncertainty in Washington.** We've got a split Congress, a president with no mandate, and, while there's talk of a quick tax cut retroactive to the first of the year, tax cuts are traditionally delayed in Congress to the point where it's too late for them to help a recession (the cuts may in fact help the recovery because Congress probably

won't get them in place until the recession is virtually over). This tax cut will face an especially difficult time because we have such a divided Congress. The earliest they say they could act is by the middle of the year, and I think we should add another three months to that because of the lack of a mandate. Since the recession probably won't run much beyond the end of this year, we shouldn't expect the proposed tax cuts to ward it off.

✓ **The stock market is still overblown.** We've got over a 100 price-to-earnings ratio on the NASDAQ (many times higher than historic norms, suggesting that many of those stocks are still wildly overpriced and headed for some serious correction), and the real vulnerability now is in profits. Profits are getting squeezed by the combination of unit labor costs going up, the prospect of weakening volume and the fact that few businesses have any pricing power (and consequently will experience price declines as the economy weakens.)

Lower profits mean disappointments, disappointments mean lower stock prices and lower stock prices mean that consumers who have been spending from stock appreciation instead of from savings will lose confidence and spend less. **L.M.**



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Circle No. 117 on Reader Inquiry Card



Simplot

Make lawn maintenance low maintenance

Common sense ideas for selecting and siting trees and plants for affordable long-term beauty

BY RALPH NICOLosi, PH.D.

Too often, landscape architects and designers create landscapes with little, if any, regard as to how much it will cost to maintain them. Their designs can become so bogged in aesthetics, harmony, composition and the interrelationship of spaces that they fail to recognize the costs associated with property upkeep.

With the exception of payroll and taxes, grounds maintenance is one of the most costly operating expenses property and facility managers face. Consequently, landscape architects and designers have an obligation to deliver a finished product to their clients that reflects serious consideration of long-term maintenance and associated costs.

Understanding consequences

A commercial landscape design should do the following:

- Maximize a property's overall appearance, drive-by and curb appeal.
- Control current and future landscape and grounds care costs and expenses.
- Protect and enhance the client's landscape investment through careful plant selection and placement.

As a result, a successful landscape architect or designer knows how to do more than just draw pretty shapes. He or she understands every consequence of every com-



Select street trees that can survive limited space, reflected heat and — in the North — de-icing products.

ponent of a proposed landscape before it's installed, when it's installed and 10 years after it's been installed.

Pick the right plants

Proper plant selection and placement is a cornerstone of good design. Select and arrange species and cultivars suited for their purpose, such as providing screens, accents or shade. Choose and site them with minimum maintenance as one of the primary considerations.

Pest resistance: Regardless of their aes-

thetic value or intended use, avoid plants that are even marginally susceptible to pests. Why increase the potential for regular chemical control? It's environmentally unsound and expensive. For example, while crabapple trees are attractive ornamentals, many of the cultivars still in the trade are susceptible to apple scab, which requires regular fungicide applications.

Culture: Match plants with their site conditions. Urban settings present a harsh environment for trees and shrubs. Usually,

continued next page



How large will this tree become as it matures? What is its purpose? These are vital considerations for a commercial site like this one.

the soils are compacted, heat reflects from parking lots and sidewalks, and the plantings are exposed to urban pollution such as de-icing agents. Flowering dogwoods thrive on country hillsides but could never tolerate these tough urban conditions and should be avoided.

Select plants with few cultural or physical maintenance requirements both generally and within the specific context of the design. It's not wise to select plants that require regular pruning or ornamentals that are weak-wooded or produce a lot of fruit. Also reconsider using plants that require specific soil conditions.

Fast-growing shrubs such as pyracantha or forsythia require regular pruning. Sweetgum trees annually produce thousands of 1-in. diameter spiny fruits that are messy, unsightly and difficult to clean up. Plants that require acidic soils such as rhododendrons and river birches need costly remedial soil amendments to ensure their survival when they're planted in the wrong site. Herbaceous perennials were erroneously marketed years ago

as low-maintenance plantings, but they should be used with discretion as well.

Plant placement: Be aware of trees and shrubs' mature sizes in relation to their proximity to other landscape elements to avoid creating additional regular maintenance.

Select plants with few cultural or physical maintenance requirements both generally and within the specific context of the design.

Don't plant trees such as pin oaks that have pendulous lower branches next to walkways, streets or parking lots where those branches could interfere with traffic. Likewise, fast-growing, spreading shrubs such

as burning bush and dense yews shouldn't be sited within confined areas.

Variety: In addition to providing seasonal color and textural interest, a variety of plant species will reduce the likelihood of pest problems and subsequent maintenance costs. Monoculture plantings (e.g. the use of one species of shade tree) are more susceptible to insect and disease infestations than mixed species plantings. Webworm infestations on Honeylocust trees, for example, can defoliate individual trees and spread rapidly to others throughout a landscape. Furthermore, because monoculture plantings are uniform in texture, size and general appearance, even minor insect or disease damage is more noticeable than if it occurred in a diverse planting.

Location, location, location

The location of elements in a landscape influences its long-term maintenance needs nearly as much as the elements themselves. Locate sidewalks, for example, according to "desire lines," the preferred convenient

routes people choose when walking from one place to another. If sidewalks aren't placed properly, people will damage lawns and shrubs by establishing shortcut paths.

Don't plant beds, trees and other landscape elements too close to one another or to a lawn border's edge. These areas become too difficult to mow efficiently. Configure bed lines and other defining elements in a landscape to provide easy access and maximum maneuverability for mowers and other maintenance equipment.



Maintenance will be easy here.



Small plants can grow into large plants. Site them properly.

Tackling trees

Street trees: Tree lawns (the areas between sidewalks and streets) are difficult environments for most trees because:

- limited space restricts root growth,

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- adjacent surfaces of sidewalk and street reflect intense heat, and

- regular use of salt or other de-icing agents in the north creates toxic soil salinity levels.

That's why it's critical to specify the most urban-tolerant species for street tree plantings.

Carefully consider size (height and breadth) and branching habits when specifying trees for tree lawns. Trees that will grow tall shouldn't be placed where there are existing or planned overhead utility lines. Be careful of the types of trees you site at properties' entrances and exits. They shouldn't interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or obscure the vision of motorists and pedestrians entering or exiting a property. In these areas, use trees with fastigate or upright growth habits as opposed to



These low-growing evergreens don't block the view in this parking lot, and mulch allows the area to be maintained without mowing. However, plants so close to the road can suffer damage from de-icing spray.

those with broad and full branching patterns.

Trees that tend to heave sidewalks (river birch, Norway maple, honeylocust) should never be used.

Parking lot plantings: Just as with street tree plantings, trees and shrubs specified for

parking lot islands and borders must be urban tolerant. They, too, are subjected to the dangers of snow piling, reflected heat and limited planting areas.

Plant trees with upright-growing branches to avoid interfering with traffic and obscuring pedestrian and motorist visibility. Similarly, shrubs used in parking lot islands or separation islands should be dwarf-growing with a maximum size of three feet at maturity.

Building and foundation plantings: No landscape element **This small island creates a maintenance problem because of the small area of turfgrass that needs regular tending and mowing.**

ments should be positioned where they will block lighting or create recessed spaces that could potentially compromise security and safety. Walkways, patios and other communal areas should be designed and planted so they remain unobstructed and open. Don't select trees or plants that will block windows at any stage of growth and maturity.

To minimize future maintenance, building plantings should be spaced as follows:

- Medium-sized shrubs (to six feet at maturity) should be sited no closer than four feet to buildings.
- Small shrubs (to three feet at maturity) no closer than two feet.
- Shade trees (those ex-





Above: (Top) Trees' mature height should be considered when overhead features like power lines are involved. (Bottom) Access to meters is important, but adequate screening should be offered to the passerby.

ceeding 45 feet in height at maturity) no closer than 20 feet.

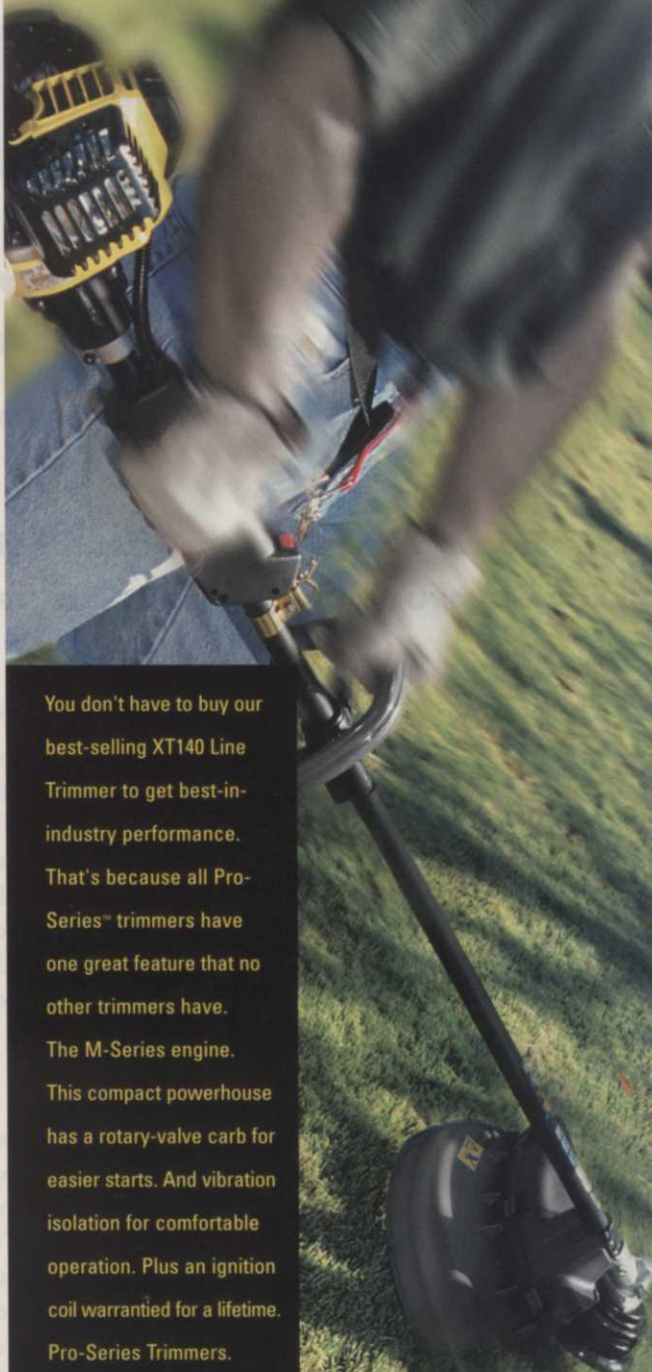
- Ornamental trees no closer than 12 feet to buildings.

While much of this has to do with common sense, we sometimes don't see it exhibited in some of the ill-conceived designs in newly constructed commercial developments. We need to restore low maintenance to landscape design and make it one of the most important criteria by which it's judged. We need to restore common sense in landscape design. **LM**

— Ralph Nicolosi is with Landscape Management & Consulting, Columbus, OH. He can be reached at 614/487-1967.

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Managing diseases



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DAVEY TREE EXPERT COMPANY

Don't be a "fungicide addict." Know how contact and systemic products differ, and use them effectively

BY HENRY T. WILKINSON

Editors' note: Last month, Part 1 of this two-part series looked at ecological factors that cause turf disease development, as well as basic strategies for management. Unfortunately, the first page of that article was omitted from the magazine. You can read the entire article at www.landscapemanagement.net, or, if you call 440/891-2623, we'll fax you the missing page. This month's article explains the difference between contact and systemic products and explains how to choose which kind of product best suits your turf.

Fungicides are only "needed" because of our high expectations for turf quality, but more people are relying on them because of their availability and the increasing demand for "perfect" turf. I describe this as "fungicide addiction," and believe it leads to poor grass and anxiety.

Chemicals used as fungicides

Tables 1 and 2 list chemicals that are registered for turfgrass use. Check your local regulations to determine what you can use. Also, some of these materials are no longer available. Table 1 lists fungicides considered systemic, while Table 2 lists those considered to have contact activity.

The common name refers to a fungicide's active ingredient; the trade name refers to the marketed name; and the chemical class refers to the active ingredient's chemical structure. The mode of action refers to how the active ingredient inhibits a fungus, and the resistance risk indicates how likely it is that a fungicide will perpetuate a genetic change (i.e. chemical resistance) in a fungus.

How contact fungicides work

Contact fungicides are also known as protectants because they're intended to intercept a fungus and prevent it from infecting (getting inside) a grass plant. They inhibit fungi not by penetrating plant tissues, but by interfering with their growth and development in a number of ways, i.e. multiple site inhibitors (MSI). MSIs reduce the risk of fungal resistance. To develop resistance, a fungus needs to change its DNA. In nature, changes in fungal DNA are brought about by several mechanisms.

I won't explain these complicated processes, but you should know that most genetic changes kill fungi, and these changes hardly ever occur. When a fungus has to change its DNA more than once, the chances of it succeeding are so rare that it won't happen. Therefore, contact fungicides remain effective even if you use them repeatedly.

Since they're toxic to many non-target fungi that are beneficial to your turf, repeated use of contact fungicides isn't a wise choice. To work, they must cover plant surfaces before fungi attack. If the fungal pathogen attacks the leaves, it's easy to apply the contact fungicide to them. Remember to apply the fungicide frequently since the leaves are growing and the new leaf tissue will be unprotected. In

continued on page 39

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Monsanto scientists used scanning-electron microscopy to photograph the effects of weeds sprayed with Roundup Pro and an imitator. Taken just one hour after application, these images clearly show more formulation in the leaf sprayed with Roundup Pro.

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The proof is in the roots.²

Scientists also used autoradiography to photograph and measure the amount of herbicide in the roots two hours after application. Time after time, at least three times more herbicide showed up in the weeds sprayed with Roundup Pro. With the imitator, barely any herbicide has moved to the roots.



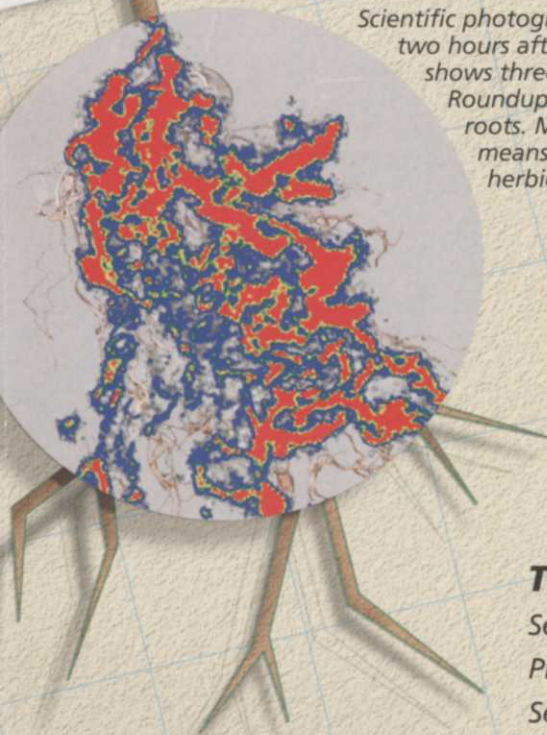
This is a cross-section of a weed leaf magnified 1000x. The yellow droplets mean Roundup Pro is already at work inside.



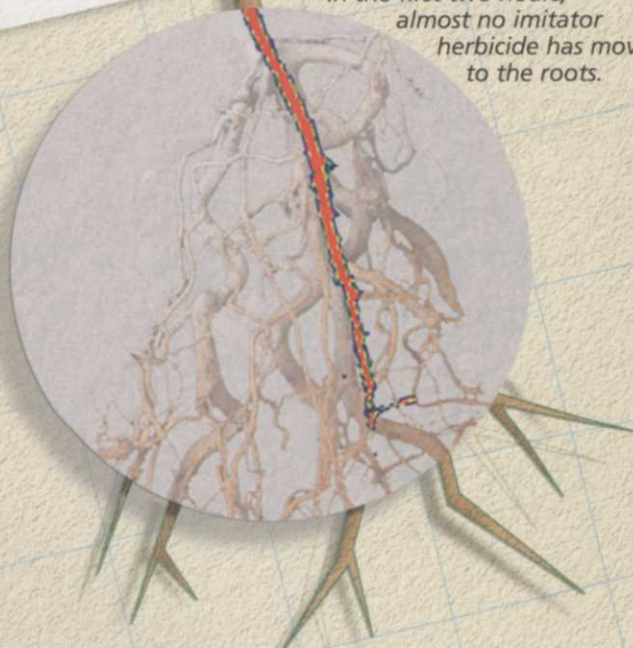
This weed, sprayed with the imitator, has almost no droplets in the leaf.

Glypro Plus

In the first two hours, almost no imitator herbicide has moved to the roots.



Scientific photography taken two hours after application shows three times more Roundup Pro in the roots. More color means more herbicide.



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Always read and follow label directions. Test conducted with MON 77360, EPA Reg #524-475 with comparison to Dow product carrying EPA Reg. # 62719-322. 1. Test methodology: In scanning-electron microscopy Monsanto scientists identified penetrated formulations of both Roundup Pro and Glypro Plus in the mesophyll cell layer. These micrographs support the evidence that formulations containing Monsanto's patented PROformance technology rapidly penetrate the leaf surface. 2. Test methodology: Radiolabeled formulations were applied at equal acid-equivalent rates. Radioactivity was visualized by autoradiography following a simulated rain event two hours after application. Monsanto laboratory tests, 2000. Glypro Plus is a trademark of Dow AgroSciences LLC. Roundup®, Roundup Pro® and PROformance™ are trademarks of Monsanto Company. [10613 jct 1/01]
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the spring, this could be every week or more.

The growth of the crown, rhizomes, stolons or roots can also leave their new leaf tissues exposed to fungal pathogens, but the problem is further complicated by the fact that they're surrounded by soil. Soil and organic matter will filter and bind many chemicals to their surfaces, which forces you to use more compound to achieve disease control. It's a vicious cycle you won't win because these compounds also unbalance the turf ecosystem and create weak turf.

How systemic fungicides work

Systemic fungicides have been around for only 20 years. They're called "systemic" because, once applied to turf, they move.

Beware: Systemic implies that the compound will move into all of a plant's cells. You might think that if you apply it to the leaves, it will end up in the roots, and if you apply it to the soil, it will end up in all the roots and leaves. This, however, is not the case!

Some fungicides are described as locally systemic, which means they only move a few cells away from the point of entry. This is most likely the case for the majority of systemic fungicides.

Table 1 lists 19 systemic fungicides. For the most part, they have different active ingredients (chemistries). They also have different carriers, or materials upon which the active ingredient is loaded for the purpose of application. The carrier itself can have fungicidal activity and can affect how the active ingredient reacts and enters a plant. Companies that develop a fungicide test

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TABLE 1: SYSTEMIC FUNGICIDES GROUPED BY CHEMISTRY AND MODE OF ACTION^a

Common name	Trade name	Mode of action	Resistance risk
(benzimidazoles):			
benomyl	Tersan 1991*	mitotic poison (SSI)	high
thiophanates	Fungo, Cleary 3336	mitotic poison (SSI)	high
(phenylamide):			
metalaxyl	Subdue, Apron	RNA synthesis inhibitor	high
mefanoxam	Subdue MAXX	RNA synthesis inhibitor	high
(1,2,4-triazoles):			
cyproconazole	Sentinel*	demethylase inhibitor	moderate
myclobutanil	Eagle	DMI	moderate
propiconazole	Banner	DMI	moderate
tebuconazole	Lynx	DMI	(expmtl)
triadimefon	Bayleton	DMI	moderate
triticonazole	Triton	DMI	(expmtl)
(pyrimidinemethanol):			
fenarimol	Rubigan	DMI	moderate
(strobilurins):			
azoxystrobin	Heritage	respiration inhibitor	moderate
kresoxim-methyl	Experimental	cytochrome bc complex	moderate
trifloxystrobin	Compass	in mitochondria	moderate
(dicarboximides):			
iprodione	Chipco 26019, GT	not well known	moderate
vinclozolin	Vorlan, Curalan	not well known	moderate
(benzamide):			
flutolanil	Prostar	multi-site	low
(carbamate):			
propamocarb	Banol	membrane disruption MSI	low
(phosphonate):			
fosetyl-aluminum	Aliette	indirect plant activity	low

(a) Some are single-site inhibitors (SSI), and a few are multi-site inhibitors (MSI). SSIs have a moderate to high risk of developing fungicide resistance.

(*) Systemic fungicides marked with an asterisk are no longer available.

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many carriers to determine which works best. However, each grass type has different surface chemistries, and each will react dif-

ferently to a carrier. Sometimes, one fungicide can be more effective than another because of the carrier.

Don't overestimate how well fungicides

with translocative or systemic properties work. In most cases I've seen, the compound's movement, once applied, is limited to short distances within the plant. Proof of this is how quickly fungicidal protection is lost when the grass plant actively grows or when the pathogen is aggressive.

Another limitation with systemics is that they take three to five days to move into a plant, redistribute and build up enough active ingredient.

I've observed systemics fail to control a disease they purportedly are effective against. This results from applying systemic

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Contact fungicides that control dollar spot (shown here) well are chlorothalonil, mancozeb and thiram.

fungicide when disease pressure is high; the pathogen simply overruns the plant before the fungicide reaches full effectiveness. Combine this with rapid or poor turf growth and it appears as though the fungicide failed.

To be effective, systemic fungicides must be applied when disease severity is low. This means you have to scout your turf and look for the start of disease. This is why it's important to use as many turf management techniques as possible to slow down the rate of disease development.

Which systemic is best?

Use a fungicide that's effective against the fungus causing the disease in your turf.

Circle 123

TABLE 2: CONTACT FUNGICIDES^a

Common name	Trade name	Chemical class
captan	Captan	carboximide
chloronebb	Terraneb SP	chlorinated aromatic
chlorothalonil	Daconil	nitrile
etridiazole (ethazole) ^b	Terrazole, Koban	triazazole
mancozeb	Fore, Manzate	ethylene bis-dithiocarbamate
PCNB (quintozene) ^b	Turfcide, Terraclor	chlorinated aromatic
thiram	Spotrete	dithiocarbamate

a Also known as "protectant" fungicides. Contact fungicides remain on plant surfaces and don't penetrate into tissues. All are multi-site inhibitors and have low risk for supporting fungal resistance development.

b Purported to have some systemic activity.

They don't work equally against all fungi. It's important that you develop your own information on fungicide effectiveness.

One of the main differences among the active ingredients of

systemic fungicides is their mode of action. In selecting a systemic fungicide, use this checklist of considerations:

► What disease do you want to control?

► What fungicides have good activity against "my" disease?

► What order of resistance risk do various products show?

Then, choose the most effective

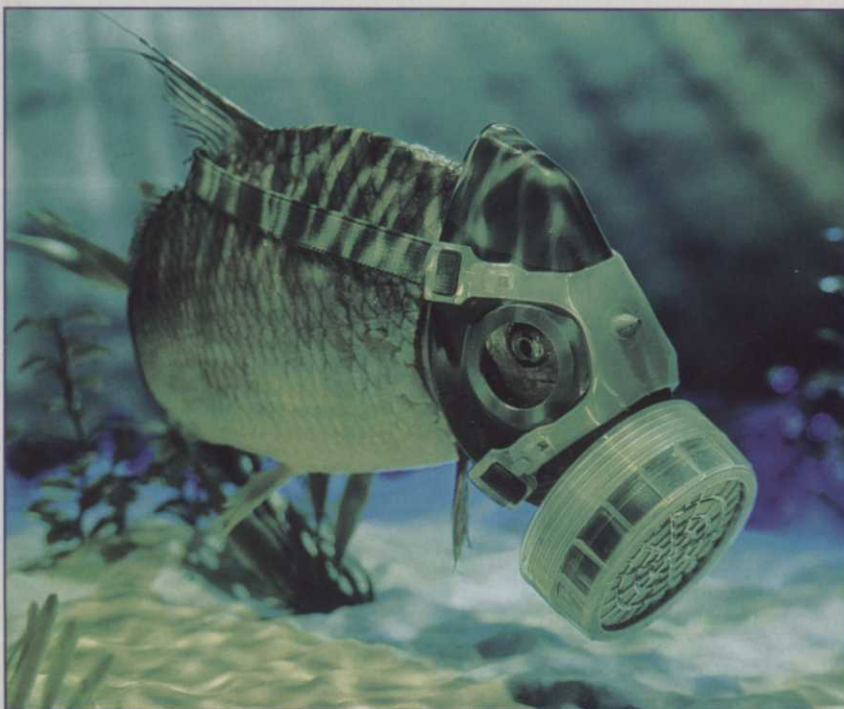
fungicide. If repeated applications are needed during a single season, use another product with a different mode of action.

If you aren't achieving adequate disease control, consult with a turfgrass pathologist before selecting other fungicides. **LJM**

— The author is a professor at the University of Illinois.

Read More www.landscapemanagement.net

Visit our Web site's "This Month's Features" page for a Quick Reference Guide to contact and systemic fungicides for managing turfgrass diseases that spells out which products are most effective against which diseases.



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Property at a glance

Location: BNA Corporate Center, Nashville, TN

Staff: AAA Lawn Industries

Category: Small site

Year site built: 1984

Acres of turf: 3

Acres of woody ornamentals: 2

Acres of display beds: 1,800 sq. ft.

Total paved area: 7 acres

Total man-hours/week: 50

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Working around tenants and their vehicles
- ▶ Old irrigation system
- ▶ Maintaining mature plants with limited budget

On the job

- ▶ 4 full-time staff, 8 seasonal employees, 2 licensed pesticide applicators

BNA Corporate Center

A 2000 Grand Award Winner of the Professional Grounds Management Society for Small Site

It's rumored that AAA Lawn Industries employees who take care of the BNA Corporate Center whistle George Strait tunes while they're mowing and weeding. It probably has a lot to do with the fact that both AAA and BNA are located in Nashville, TN, where any cowpoke with a six-string and a dream can shoot for jukebox glory.

But the only string AAA employees play with is located at the end of a trimmer. And just because BNA is a small property doesn't mean they have time to sing in the sun. Extra care is taken to keep grass clippings out of 1,800 sq. ft. of flower beds. Crew members edge tree wells once a week, and clear curbs, sidewalks and patios with backpack blowers after they mow and edge the property. On the property's north side, they use weed eaters to attack a slope steeper than Clint Black's Stetson. There is plenty to prune on this property, including pfitzer junipers and creeping euonymus. Since the irrigation system is old, it needs to be constantly monitored.

The quality work at BNA is reflected in crisp edge lines and eye-pleasing mowing patterns. On a bright spring day, the Bradford pear trees are breathtaking, as are the Yoshino cherry trees and specimen Japanese maples. Color? The crew puts out over 10,000 annuals each spring.

Flower beds are meticulously weeded and groomed by a dedicated specialty crew.



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Editors' note: *Landscape Management* is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 2001 winners will be named at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. For more information on the 2001 Awards, contact PGMS at:

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Japanese maples decorate a courtyard between the buildings where tenants can take a break from their hectic day. (Inset) A bright pansy and tulip display welcomes building tenants to work.





Hardline on hardscape

BY VICKY POULSEN

Three landscape company managers talk about the risks and rewards of installing hardscaping

Hardscaping done right can be a landscape professional's signature mark, especially in high-end residential and commercial markets where price isn't a huge factor.

Those contractors who can "deliver the goods" at the price promised are a hot commodity.

Whether it be a simple brick-edge design to showcase a flowerbed or an elaborate, natural-looking stone wall nestled around a koi-filled pond, it seems like everyone these days wants to add a feature to their outdoor space. Consumers are hungry for products and materials similar to the ones they see on HGTV (Home and Garden Television). The astute contractor will find a way to feed their insatiable appetite with appealing designs that will make their homes stand out.

Unlike plant installations, hardscapes carry huge financial risks. Retaining walls that fail and pavers that crack cost contrac-

▲ PHOTO COURTESY YARDMASTER, INC.

tors thousands of dollars to redo. Whether the installer or the manufacturer is to blame, the results can be disastrous to a contractor's reputation.

The rewards for properly installed hardscaping are big, though. To get an idea of how others have succeeded in this field, we asked three contractors from across the country to lay out their blueprints for hardscape project success. Here's what they had to say:

LARGE CONTRACTOR

Name: Kurt Kluznik, CCLP

Title: President

Company: Yardmaster, Inc.

Location: Painesville, OH

2000 revenues: \$9 million

Business mix: 50% residential, 50% commercial

Employees: 250

Company profile: Started business in 1971.

Has three locations in Cleveland area, one in Columbus and another in Detroit. Operates 50 to 60 crews of up to six members



a team, depending on the job. More than half of the design/build services the company provides are devoted to hardscapes (i.e. water features, walls, patios, walks, arbors, fences, gazebos, pools, etc.).

Product picks: "We buy a lot of stone from manufacturers and from quarries in Ohio and Pennsylvania. We also use a lot of the Unilock products." Wood, liners, filters, pumps, outdoor lighting and irrigation supplies also top their product list.

Design stage: "We have landscape architects on staff who do our design work. Through their interview process with our clients, we get a feel for what our clients like and what will work well with the site. We try to pick up colors and textures that already exist on the site and match those styles or properties with the products we'll be using. I think more people are being exposed to creative and functional landscape design, and that exposure is driving the market.

"We also have a studio loaded with photos portraying samples of our work and pallets of materials and styles, so when customers visit they actually pull a photo or material from our display board and find exactly what suits their tastes. It also exposes clients to other hardscape possibilities they weren't looking for when they first came in."

Profit tips: "We get our budget clues from the types of homes our customers own. We also have an excellent estimating process that develops the most cost-effective budget for each project."

Extra help: "We subcontract some of our work (even some design work) to meet the 'seasonability' or demands at the time. We'll also use subs who worked for us at one time but now have their own design or construction businesses."

Words of wisdom: "Hardscaping is a lot of fun because it allows you to get creative. However, there are lots of risks involved. If you build a wall and it falls, or if a patio doesn't drain right and you have to redo it, it can cost you \$100,000. It takes a lot of experience. Plus, there's a lot of non-billable time that's involved before you set foot on the site. If you don't estimate that time, it can be a nightmare."

MEDIUM CONTRACTOR

Name: Mike Wheat
Title: Owner
Company: Wheat's Lawn & Custom Landscape
Location: Vienna, VA
2000 revenues: \$6.7 million
Business mix: Mostly residential
Employees: 80 off-season/90 peak season
Company profile: Started in 1978, the company serves high-end residential ac-



counts. Service mix includes 30% design/build, 55% maintenance and 15% turf and tree/shrub care. Of design/build services, 25% is devoted to hardscape. Also employs a mason. Specific hardscape services include pavers, retaining walls, benches, arbors and gazebos. Operates two- to three-man crews; number of crews depends on the job.

Product picks: "We look for quality products with great manufacturer and dealer support. That's critical to us."

Design stage: "We have landscape architects and designers on staff."

Profit tips: "We interview our clients to learn what their wants and needs are, and then we present various options to them based on what they tell us. We're in a high-income area, so price really isn't an issue."

Extra help: "We do everything in-house. We subcontract some electrical work."

Words of wisdom: "Be selective with clients, and make sure you price accurately. We're not in it to make a quick buck. We're in it for the long-term relationship with our customer. Our customer service is second-to-none, and that's key to our success."

SMALL CONTRACTOR

Name: Michael Becker
Title: Co-owner
Company: Estate Gardeners, Inc.
Location: Omaha, NE
2000 revenues: \$470,000
Business mix: Mostly residential
Employees: 15
Company profile: Estate Gardeners, Inc. was established in 1993. Landscape design/build installation work amounts to 80% of the services they provide, with the remaining 20% devoted to garden maintenance. Operates three-person crews devoted to both installation and maintenance. "In our area, we have the highest percentage per capita of millionaires. We have one customer who hired us to install

two 10,000 sq. ft. lakes, the cost of which will equal our total sales of last year."

Product picks: "When purchasing products for our hardscape projects, I'm looking for quality and appearance. I can't use a highly durable product if it doesn't look good. Looks and durability have to go hand-in-hand. If I'm doing segmental concrete retaining walls, I want blocks I can break for corners. With pavers, I'm looking for a variety of colors and shapes. Unfortunately, I think these man-made walls lack the soul of natural products, but they're effective for what they're made to do. You can't

beat these walls when it comes to strength. And we do incorporate natural materials such as moss rock boulders and rubble stones when we can."

Design stage: "We do our own landscape designs with the help of a computer software program. We also charge for our landscape designs, and make that clear when we meet with clients. At the end of the design process, the customer can keep the design and do what they want with it."

Profit tips: "Before we plan designs for customers, we want to know their budget

"Educate yourself about the materials and processes of installing them properly by talking with your suppliers. Never cut corners. Follow the manufacturers' suggestions.

constraints and ultimate goals for the entire site. From there, we develop a master plan and begin to inventory their favorite colors, garden preference such as an Italian or French design, and lifestyle needs. Communication is key to our success. We listen to our customers as well as educate them. Many times, they've never worked with a design/build firm and don't know what to expect. They want a nice garden, but they don't know how it comes together."

Extra help: "A good network of subcontractors is key in keeping ahead of a project. However, any communications go through us first. We're the ones our customers go to if they have a question or concern. This gives us control over the entire project."

Words of wisdom: "Educate yourself about the materials and processes of installing them properly by talking with your suppliers. Never cut corners. Follow the manufacturers' suggestions. Like your lawn chemicals, always read the labels first. Unlike landscape work, hardscape work can cost you thousands of dollars if something goes wrong." **LM**



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Circle 122

All natural

Manufacturers talk about the increasing demand for natural-looking hardscape products

BY VICKY POULSEN

Natural products seem to be all the rage when it comes to hardscape. But since they can't always be used to create the desired look, manufacturers offer synthetic products that can withstand tough weather conditions and look as beautiful as the real thing.

As a result of watching home improvement projects on television and visiting large retail home outlet stores, consumers today are more savvy. They demand innovative design, expert workmanship and quality products. They also look for outdoor products that reflect their lifestyle and the personality of their home.

Many consumers consider their yard a natural extension of their living space, and that probably explains why there's been an explosive growth in patio, pond, gazebo, terrace and deck sales.

We went to product manufacturers and asked them what the hottest items in the hardscape market are today. Here's what they had to say:

Bomanite, Madera, CA
559/673-2411

Chris Stewart, Vice President/Technical Services

Hardscape products: Colored, textured and imprinted architectural concrete paving.

Key trends: "Consumers are looking for textures and colors that highlight patterns and achieve an antiquing effect. Some patterns vary from formal to abstract patterns to non-repetitive stone slate-type material that can also be combined with different textures to create a different look or accent different design areas.

The Bomanite process begins with a concrete mix poured into forms to create a monolithic slab. After initial floating, a dry-shake color hardener is hand cast evenly across the plastic surface of the wet concrete, then uniformly floated into the surface. A second shake of color is applied, then the surface is re-floated.

These pavers from Bomanite achieve an antiquing effect.

When textured tools are going to be used, a release agent is applied across the colored concrete's surface. The next step is

the imprinting phase, then the sealer when the concrete is well-cured."

continued on next page





Versa-Lok's retaining walls provide an attractive, random appearance.

continued from page 47

Best features: "The sealing process prevents moisture penetration and protects the color. Monolithic construction eliminates loose or "turned up" paving materials. Bomanite has greater durability and structural strength of its plain gray counterpart and can take on the color, texture and pattern of other materials."

**Curv-Rite, Wayland, MI
800/366-2878**

John Mindling, Director of Sales

Hardscape products: Aluminum landscape edging and paver restraints.

Key trends: "In today's market, there seems to be a movement toward more natural landscapes. Contractors are installing flower beds that have softer lines. Long, sweeping

curves have replaced hard, formal rectangular bed shapes. People also seem to want new landscape installations to look as if they've been in place for years.

We've found that contractors are looking for landscape edging that's easy to install, flexible enough to incorporate curvilinear designs, and strong enough to maintain straight-aways. They also want edging that maintains their bed design edges but doesn't draw attention to itself, and they want it to stand up to abuse from professional maintenance equipment."

Best features: "Curv-Rite was started with the intent of making a safe, easy-to-install landscape edging product. We chose to make the product out of aluminum because of its unique properties. Aluminum is a renewable resource that's

lightweight yet extremely durable; won't rust like steel or rot like wood; impervious to heat and won't crack in the cold; and has the ability to be flexed into many shapes.

"Our telescoping design runs through the entire section of edging, eliminating waste and speeding up the installation process. This connection eliminates the need for separate connector pieces to join sections together. You also don't lose the ability to connect sections together if you cut a section in half. The profile of our landscape edging is symmetrical, which means it cannot be installed upside down."

**Master-Halco,
La Habra, CA**

562/694-5066

Michael Lindsey, Marketing Manager

Hardscape products: Offers a variety of fence solutions, from chain-link to wood fencing, ornamental iron to vinyl.

Key trends: "We're seeing an accelerated growth in PVC (vinyl) fencing primarily because it's low maintenance. You never have to worry about painting, rotting, warping, termites, corrosion or rust. When you consider the benefits of vinyl, it's a cost-effective solution in the long run. Wood has also peaked in price lately, where the cost for vinyl has de-

creased in recent months as it becomes more mainstream."

Best features: "Ease-of-installation is an important factor to our installers. Our products are designed to be user-friendly and aesthetically-pleasing. A complicated installation can cost a contractor time and money. Our fence systems are engineered to reduce installation mistakes.

"For example, our Monumental Iron Works fence is a modular system made up of many component parts designed to support each other. Using industrial rivets, the constructed panels have the solid look and feel of authentic ornamental iron."

**Permaloc Corp.,
Holland, MI
800/356-9660**

Bob Anderson, Director of Sales and Marketing

Hardscape products: Aluminum edging.

Key trends: "The addition of elaborate and complex bedding designs using aluminum landscape edging, brick pavers and increased amounts of decorative stone is the hot trend."

Best features: "The vertical grade changes and curvilinear demands incorporated into these new residential designs require the installer to use professional grade products such as

aluminum landscape edging and paver restraints to achieve long-term integrity."

Versa-Lok Retaining Wall Systems, Oakdale, MN
800/770-4525

Matt Singer, National Sales Manager

Hardscape products: Segmental retaining wall systems.

Key trends: "Landscape professionals are seeking more natural-looking products like our weathered Accent segment and Mosaic retaining wall systems which provide an at-

tractive, random appearance. Our weathered concrete units undergo a tumbling process to create rustic, old world character. We carefully blend specific colors to give our products a more natural look. For example, in the midwest, we can dye our block with a brown/tan blend to fit the aesthetic needs of that region. Because they're integrally-colored, units may be split or modified without loss of color. Our concrete SRW units can create beautiful hardscapes such as planters, staircases, columns, free-standing walls, concrete patios and large retaining walls."

Best features: "Our concrete segmental units offer unlimited design capabilities. Solid units are so versatile that curves, corners, steps and columns can be made using only one block. By sawing or splitting solid units, structurally stable corners ranging from 25-degree outside corners to 140-degree inside corners can be built. With all our products, no mortar or concrete footings are required."

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Circle 120

HARDSCAPE *products*



Chip off the old block

Presto's Geoblock porous pavement system is a series of interlocking blocks designed to offer turf protection and load support in areas used by heavy vehicles. The blocks create a flexible structural bridge system within the topsoil layer to support and distribute concentrated loads. For more information contact Presto at 800/548-3424 / Circle no. 273

Paving the way

Bomanite Corporation offers a variety of colored, textured and imprinted architectural concrete paving. The company offers 100 patterns and 25 colors in textures such as slate, granite, limestone, sandstone, cobblestone and used brick. Also offered are two types of imprinting tools for smooth surfaces (such as tile or brick patterns) and natural textured surfaces (such as granite or wood patterns). For more information contact Bomanite at 559/673-2411 or www.bomanite.com / Circle no. 272



Edging along

PermaLoc Corporation's CleanLine aluminum landscape bed edging is easy to install and available in 1/8- or 3/16-in. thickness by 3-, 4- or 5-1/2-in. depth. Finishes include mill (natural aluminum), black duraflex (electrostatically applied, baked on paint) and black anodized. Heavy aluminum stakes lock on to the



edging and anchor it into the ground. An interlocking snap-down connection eliminates possible weak points in the system. For more information contact PermaLoc at 800/356-9660 / Circle no. 274

Go mosaic

Versa-Lok's mosaic retaining wall system provides an attractive, random appearance while maintaining installation simplicity and durability. Mosaic walls use three solid concrete units of varying heights and widths to



achieve a complicated yet classic appearance. The split face of each unit blends well into any natural or architectural environment. For more information contact Versa-Lok at 800/770-4525 or www.versa-lok.com / Circle no. 275

Nice curves

Curv-Rite's aluminum edging system is available in two different thicknesses — 1/8-in. and 3/16-in. — and is available in mill finish, deco-black, deco-bronze, deco-green or black anodize. Its telescoping design runs through the entire section of edging, eliminating waste and speeding up installation. For more information contact Curv-Rite at 800/366-2878 / Circle no. 276



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Im reports

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770/813-9200

www.agcocorp.com

The ST compact tractor series from AGCO, Atlanta, GA, consists of six 4-wheel drive units ranging from 24 to 44 hp. Four large units (30.3 to 44.2 hp) come with 16-speed transmissions.

Circle #257



BELARUS
414/355-2000

The Eicher 364 is a 39-hp utility tractor with air-cooled diesel engine, three-point hitch with draft/position control, and a lift capacity of 2,213 lbs.

Circle #258

BOBCAT
701/241-8740

infocenter@bobcat.com

New for 2001 is the T190 compact track loader from Bobcat, West Fargo, ND. It's rated at 1,900 lbs. and is only 66 in. wide.

Circle #259

ALLMAND BROS.
800/562-1373

www.allmand.com

The new Allmand TLB-220 compact tractor loader is 3,115 lbs. and features a Robin EH65D air-cooled gasoline engine generating 20.5 hp at 3,600 rpm.

Circle #260

ASV
800/346-5954

www.asvi.com

The RC-30 all-surface loader from All Season Vehicles, Inc., Grand Rapids, MN, is just under 4-ft. wide and 6-ft. tall on its rubber tracks.

Circle #261

CATERPILLAR
www.cat.com

The new Caterpillar 416D backhoe loader features 74 net hp and 14-ft., 5-in. of backhoe digging depth with standard stick and 18-ft., 1-in. with extendible stick. Bucket rotates 205 degrees.

Circle #262

JOHN DEERE
800/537-8233
www.deere.com

The John Deere 5320 has a 45-hp, three-cylinder diesel engine and comes with either four-wheel drive or MFWD capability. Transmission has nine forward and

continued on page 54

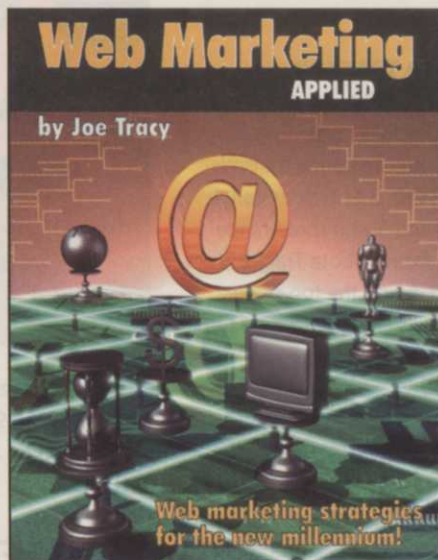
▼ **Bobcat T190**
compact track loader



Features to consider

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- ▶ **Lift capacity**
- ▶ **Digging force**
- ▶ **Breakout force**
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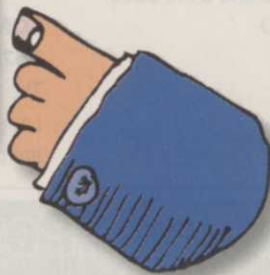
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*Written by internet specialist
and leading author, Joe Tracy*

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Im reports

Allmand Bros. TLB-220

continued from page 52
three reverse speeds.
Circle #263

NEW HOLLAND
717/355-1121
www.newholland.com

Nine models in the Boomer line from New Holland, New Holland, PA, can be equipped with a model 7106 or 7308 front loader. Units come with a 540-rpm rear PTO and a live 2000-rpm mid-PTO.

Circle #264

KUBOTA TRACTOR
888/458-2682
www.kubota.com

The 24-hp two-range transmission B2410, 27-hp three-range B2710 and 30-hp three-range B2910 from Kubota Tractor, Torrance, CA, are the top of the company's line. All have a Kubota E-TVSC diesel.

Circle #265

LONG AGRIBUSINESS
252/823-4151

The LandTrac 280 and 360 from Long Agribusiness, Tarboro, NC, are powered by Mitsubishi indi-



rect injection diesel engines. The 280 is a 28-hp, 91.5-cu. in. unit with 27 PTO hp at 2600 rpm.

Circle #266

MTD PRODUCTS
330/225-2600

www.cubcadet.com

The 7360SS Cub Cadet compact tractor from MTD, Cleveland, OH, has a 36-hp, four-cylinder, liquid-cooled diesel engine; differential lock and four-wheel drive; and hydrostatic power steering.

Circle #267

POWER TRAC
800/THE-YARD

www.power-trac.com

The PT1430 tractor from Power-Trac, Tazewell, VA, has a 30-hp Deutz diesel engine. It articulates plus/minus 45 degrees and oscillates 12 degrees in each direction.

Circle #268

SCHAEFF
214/357-8300

www.schaeff.com

Its Dallas, TX division distributes the SCL 515 compact loader

from Langenburg, Germany-based Schaeff. It's powered by a Deutz F41 50-hp engine with air/oil cooling system.

Circle #269

TORO CO.
800/525-0059

www.toro.com

The Z Master series from Toro, Bloomington, MN, is based on a tractor powered by either a 20-hp or 25-hp Kohler Command Pro air-cooled engine with electronic key ignition.

Circle #270

YANMAR
800/550-9530

The 36.5 hp V4-5 wheel loader from Yanmar Diesel America, Buffalo Grove, IL, has lift capacities of 4,134 lbs. (full lift) and 6,945 lbs. (low lift) in its 0.65-cu. yd. bucket. Two-mode control lets operator select fully automatic or fixed-speed mode.

Circle #271

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- Dick and Sharon Lafferty
Alpha Farm
Partlow, Virginia

"The other guys' equipment runs at walking pace. One nice thing about the Power Trac is that you don't have to stand up to run it. We really can economically move material around with it."

- Sally McCaulley
Eden Tree Landscaping
Hartsville, South Carolina

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1-800-THE-YARD www.power-trac.com

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- 04 285 Irrigation Contractors & Consultants
- Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) _____

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- 08 355 Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture
- 09 360 Sod Growers, Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries
- 10 365 Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers
- 11 370 Manufacturers
- Other (please specify) _____

2. Which of the following best describes your title? (fill in ONE only)

- 12 10 **Executive/Administrator** - President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant
- 13 20 **Manager/Superintendent** - Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor
- 14 30 **Government Official** - Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
- 15 40 **Specialist** - Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
- 16 50 **Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel** (please specify) _____

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3. SERVICES PERFORMED (fill in ALL that apply)

- 17 A Mowing
- 18 B Turf Insect Control
- 19 C Tree Care
- 20 D Turf Aeration
- 21 E Irrigation Services
- 22 F Turf Fertilization
- 23 G Turf Disease Control
- 24 H Ornamental Care
- 25 I Landscape Design
- 26 J Turf Weed Control
- 27 K Paving, Deck & Patio Installation
- 28 L Pond/Lake Care
- 29 M Landscape Installation
- 30 N Snow Removal
- 31 O Other (please specify) _____

4a. Do you specify, purchase or influence the selection of landscape products?

58 Yes 59 No

4b. If yes, indicate which products you buy or specify: (fill in ALL that apply)

- 32 1 Aerators
- 33 2 Blowers
- 34 3 Chain Saws
- 35 4 Chipper-Shredders
- 36 5 De-icers
- 37 6 Fertilizers
- 38 7 Fungicides
- 39 8 Herbicides
- 40 9 Insecticides
- 41 10 Line Trimmers
- 42 11 Mowers
- 43 12 Snow Removal Equipment
- 44 13 Sprayers
- 45 14 Spreaders
- 46 15 Sweepers
- 47 16 Tractors
- 48 17 Truck Trailers/Attachments
- 49 18 Trucks
- 50 19 Turfseed
- 51 20 Utility Vehicles

5. Do you have Internet access? 52 A Yes 53 B No

5A. If so, how often do you use it?

54 A Daily 55 B Weekly 56 C Monthly 57 D Occasionally

101	113	125	137	149	161	173	185	197	209	221	233	245	257	269	281	293	305
102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	210	222	234	246	258	270	282	294	306
103	115	127	139	151	163	175	187	199	211	223	235	247	259	271	283	295	307
104	116	128	140	152	164	176	188	200	212	224	236	248	260	272	284	296	308
105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
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 Signature: _____ Date: _____

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 03 260 Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)
 04 285 Irrigation Contractors & Consultants
 Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) _____

- LANDSCAPING/GROUNDS CARE FACILITIES**
 05 290 Sports Complexes
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 07 305 Schools, Colleges & Universities
 Other Grounds Care Facilities (specify) _____

- SUPPLIERS AND CONSULTANTS**
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 Other (please specify) _____

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 16 50 **Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel** (please specify) _____

- 3. SERVICES PERFORMED (fill in ALL that apply)**
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 18 B Turf Insect Control 23 G Turf Disease Control 28 L Pond/Lake Care
 19 C Tree Care 24 H Ornamental Care 29 M Landscape Installation
 20 D Turf Aeration 25 I Landscape Design 30 N Snow Removal
 21 E Irrigation Services 26 J Turf Weed Control 31 O Other (please specify) _____

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 33 2 Blowers 40 9 Insecticides 47 16 Tractors
 34 3 Chain Saws 41 10 Line Trimmers 48 17 Truck Trailers/Attachments
 35 4 Chipper-Shredders 42 11 Mowers 49 18 Trucks
 36 5 De-icers 43 12 Snow Removal Equipment 50 19 Turfseed
 37 6 Fertilizers 44 13 Sprayers 51 20 Utility Vehicles
 38 7 Fungicides 45 14 Spreaders

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5A. If so, how often do you use it?
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ask the expert

BY BALAKRISHNA RAO

Satin moths

What are satin moths? Please explain biology and management options.

— TORONTO, CANADA



The satin moth (*Leucoma salicis*) is an introduced pest. Its larvae are about 1½ to 2 in. long, black with a line

of yellow or white spots on the back and reddish brown tubercles with hairs on each segment. The larvae are active during April and May, feeding on pole-sized Populus in natural strands and plantations in New England and southeastern Canada, and also in Washington and Oregon.

Adult moths are satiny white and appear in June and August. Females can lay up to 1,000 eggs in clusters on twigs, trunks or leaves in June and July. Larvae appear in August and feed on leaves until it gets cold. They overwinter as small larvae that become active when it gets warm.

Like gypsy moths, satin moths pupate around May in cocoons on trees. Adults emerge in June.

Treatment is not necessary, but if defoliation is severe, consider applying Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) in spring. Products like Dipel or ForayBt work well.

Dying spruces

We planted many spruce trees in June 2000. Last winter, needles turned pale, and a few turned brown. What's the problem?

— MI

Based on your description, I'd say the problem is transplant shock. Digging and trans-

planting causes trees to lose large amounts of functional absorbing roots, which causes water and nutrient uptake problems. This is further aggravated by too much or too little moisture, including flooding and/or drought. The roots are the mechanical pumps, and if they're broken or diseased, they become dysfunctional. This disruption and imbalance in water uptake leads to the drying out of plant tissues. This can be further aggravated by wind and excessive evapotranspiration from exposed plant parts, particularly in evergreens when the ground is frozen. And beware — plants may look green for a period of time only because they're using their reserve water and nutrients.

Consider the possibility of girdling at the base of the stem. Mechanical girdling from nylon or wire left during planting can disrupt moisture and nutrient uptake. Examine the roots for decay from root rot fungal disease.

Guard against overfertilizing these plants, particularly with a water-soluble source of quick-release fertilizer. Improper fertilization with high salt index can burn absorbing roots. Also, don't mulch too close to the trunk as it can cause rodent feeding activity. Provide proper watering, mulching, fertilizing and pest management as needed to improve plant health.

Annual grassy weed management

In the past, we've used Surflan to manage annual grassy weeds. In some situations, we've had poor results. What do you think we might be doing wrong?

— OH

From your question, it isn't clear whether you used Surflan as a pre-emergent (before

the grassy weeds emerged) or as a post-emergent (after the weeds emerged) herbicide. Surflan is a selective pre-emergent herbicide that controls annual grasses and several broadleaf weeds. It doesn't work as a post-emergent herbicide.

If you've used Surflan as a pre-emergent herbicide and experienced variable results, the following explanation might be helpful. Make sure you're following sound procedures when tank mixing. Follow the label guidelines while mixing Surflan alone or in combination with other materials. It's important to have agitation all through mixing as well as spraying. Without proper agitation, Surflan may settle to the bottom of the sprayer tank, which could contribute to poor results. Surflan doesn't have to be incorporated, but water in within 21 days with 1/2 to 1 in. of water.

Oxalis, violets everywhere

Many of our residential and commercial lawns have oxalis (wood sorrel) and violets (*Viola* sp.). How should we manage this problem?

— OH

Application of an herbicide such as Turflon II Amine should help. Provide two applications of this herbicide four to six weeks apart. Delay watering for 24 hours and seeding for three weeks. If the area was recently seeded, wait until it has been mowed two to three times before treating.

Manager of Research and Technical Development for the Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: "Ask the Expert" Landscape Management; 7500 Old Oak Blvd.; Cleveland, OH 44130, or email: sgibson@advanstar.com. Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear.



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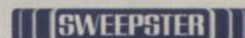
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For more information contact John Deere Inquiry Department, P.O. Box 12217, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 or www.johndeere.com / circle no. 252

Cut and clean

RedMax says the 25.4cc stato-charged two-cycle engine that powers the HEZ2500S edger is the only engine of its size that meets CARB II and EPA clean air standards without a catalytic converter. An adjustable wheel holds the blade at the desired height. A "J" handle lets you control the blade angle.

For more information contact RedMax at 800/291-8251 ext. 213 or www.redmax.com / circle no. 250

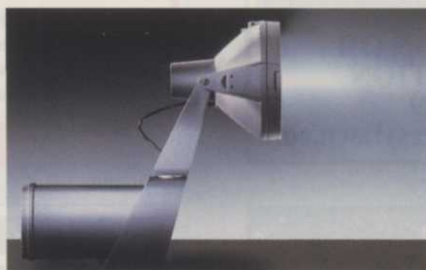
Break some ground

V & B Manufacturing's 15 Groundbreakers landscaping tools can handle rugged earth moving to fine finished ground grooming due to their multi-purpose tool heads and range of



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For more information contact V & B Manufacturing Co. at 800/443-1987 or www.vbmf.com / circle no. 251



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Architectural Landscape Lighting's Focca accent and floodlighting luminaires accentuate landscape features, signage, building entryways, gardens and pathways. They feature a streamlined, low scale, cone-shaped lamphead with a large format lens and attachable, angled visor-glare shield. Options include visors, louvers and colored lenses.

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Blue Bird International's stump grinder features a 14-in. diameter blade with carbide-tipped teeth that offers cutting depth up to 12 in. The HiPower Double V drive belt offers more operator stability and control. Other features include an ergonomic handle and user-friendly lift handles.

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For more information contact Kawasaki at www.kawasaki.com / circle no. 255

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material up to 2 in. thick. Composite grips minimize slippage, and a slide power shift allows worker to exert maximum leverage on tough material. The company says its Porter point cut pruner, 24 in. long and 3 lbs., can cut right down to its tips with minimal handle spread.

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THIS AND THAT

Yuuuummy

Imagine getting this call: "Yeah, I'd like to order one thousand linear feet of hibiscus, a ton of leafy ficus branches and a truckload of eugenia. Oh yeah, and 100 gallons of spring water to wash it down with."

The call is from the San Diego Zoo to San Diego, CA-based Miramar Wholesale Nurseries. The plant material is not going to be used to decorate the grounds but feed, and entertain, the animals. Not only do the giraffes, rhinos, gorillas, etc. find the stuff tasty, they also like to play with it. In fact, it's part of their behavioral enrichment program. This plant material stimulates the animals' minds and pleases their palates.

Of course, all of this "play food" spells big bucks for Miramar, one of the largest commercial landscape centers in southern California.



Excess supervision

Jim Creager of Natural Lawn has had about enough of his pickiest customer, a local elected judge who's also — get this — his relative!

One day, the judge called him and asked him to mow his lawn. He was in court that day, so it was his wife who gave Creager a tour of their property. It was a nice-sized home on two lots with several beds, a couple of brush piles, an old dog pen and a vegetable garden. The problem started the next time Creager visited, because the judge's wife once again showed him the whole property and detailed what to mow and what not to mow. In

fact, every time he shows up, she gives him the same rundown.

"She feels the need to tell me everything that needs to be done as if I'm a moron," Creager says.

Plus, he's been told that the beds must never have a single leaf in them, and they call as late as 11 p.m. to see if he's coming the next day.

"You should have seen the look on her face when I unloaded my new Z mower last year," Creager says. "She said, 'You're not going to mow my lawn with that thing, are you?' I've tried twice to get rid of them but they just keep calling."

THOSE DARN CRITTERS

What's the nastiest critter you've ever come up against while on the job? Tell us in 200 words or less and you might win one of our golf shirts, which are going fast. We'll pick the best story, and you might even see it in print if you win. Entries are due by July 15, 2001. Send your submissions via e-mail to jstahl@advanstar.com or snail mail to: Landscape Management, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Middleburg Heights, OH 44130.

For his story, we salute Jim with a "Landscape Management" golf shirt.

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