



Sam Farison

In 1971, brothers **Sam Farison** and Dan Farison created Farison Lawn Care with the goal of delivering the best residential lawn care possible. The company grew and established itself as the premiere lawn care company in the Louisville, KY, area. In 1995, after word spread about improvements Farison made to a local high school sports field, it started a lucrative new service.

How did your company's sports field maintenance division come about? We got started as an athletic booster, helping out at the school that I attended, Eastern High School. We did that field, and other schools started asking us to do work. The athletic director there knew everybody and he kept giving our name out — and it took off from there.

We offer a regular maintenance program for athletic fields. It's neat to be the only one in town that does something like this. We're not used to that in the lawn care business.

As you know, synthetic turf is the rage in sports fields these days. Will you be getting into that business? For some schools that's the only good option, given the amount of use their fields get. Few schools have the luxury of game fields and practice fields for every sport. But we're not going into the carpet laying business. Most of that work is subsurface construction — and while we do some field construc-

tion, we're not interested in installing synthetic turf fields. We feel there will continue to be a need for what we're doing.

Farison Lawn Care has been a recognized brand in the Louisville market for more than 35 years. Tell us how it started. My brother Dan and I were basically kids, and we were looking for ways to make money on the side, so we started mowing lawns. When FIFRA (the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, which was put under U.S. EPA oversight in 1972) came along, we were among the first people in Kentucky to get pesticide licenses.

In the late 1970s we quit mowing and concentrated on lawn care. We were the mavericks at the time because we started out as a granular company and

always put down product as granular. Now, of course, that's common.

How has the business changed since the two of you began the company? We have better products with lower levels of active ingredients. That includes fungicides, herbicides and insecticides. The evolution has been positive and environmentally friendly.

What do you see as the biggest challenges for the industry? The slowing economy and rising costs. Also the uncertainty of costs like fuel jumping up and down are making it hard to plan.

Planning for the future seems to be getting more difficult, but I'm still optimistic that consumers need and want lawn care. We'll be out there doing our own thing, which is delivering a quality lawn care program.

AT A GLANCE

COMPANY: Farison Lawn Care, Louisville, KY

FOUNDED: 1971

NUMBER OF OUTLETS: 1

EMPLOYEES: 21

EDUCATION/CERTIFICATIONS: Sam holds a bachelor's of science degree in plant sciences from Western Kentucky University; Dan attended the University of Kentucky

INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT: Sam served as a board member of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, three terms on the board of directors of the Kentucky Turfgrass Council (two terms as president, and was on the board of directors of the Green Industry Expo (one term as president)

BUSINESS OUTLOOK: "Regardless of competitive or pricing issues, we're not going to backpedal on quality products or services."

FAMILY: Sam's two daughters, Jessica and Kylie, and Dan's son, Parker, work in the business.

WEB SITE: farison.com

“WE WERE THE MAVERICKS AT THE TIME BECAUSE WE STARTED OUT AS A GRANULAR COMPANY AND ALWAYS PUT DOWN PRODUCTS AS GRANULAR.”