



OK, Doug. What is it about Scotts new ProTurf 22-0-22 NK Fairway Fertilizer that makes it a high quality product?

"We use only top quality ingredients. All the potassium is in the form of potassium sulfate. The nitrogen is balanced between quick- and slow- release forms. And each high-density particle is homogeneous... providing a consistent feeding."

What does that mean on a fairway? "Several things—quick greenup, a greening effect that lasts up to two months, even distribution of nutrients. Also, less chance of burning turf, the addition of sulfur to the soil, and no chloride salts."

And you say it's designed for fairways? "Yes. It's composed of large particles that throw a wide, even swath from a rotary spreader."

What benefits do I get from a high potassium feeding? "It's been shown that potassium will enhance turfgrass

performance—better drought hardiness, improved disease resistance, more tolerance to wear, things like that. And studies on bermudagrass attribute reduced winterkill to high potassium."

Sounds like it would be hard to go wrong with ProTurf 22-0-22 NK Fairway Fertilizer. "That's right. It can be applied any time, and it's very versatile, too. You can use double rates spring and fall in the north and all summer in the south. Half rates are great for cool season grasses during the hot summer months."

Can you sum all that up, Doug? "ProTurf 22-0-22 NK Fairway Fertilizer is a great program complement to our regular Fairway Fertilizer at 32-3-10 and our High K Fairway Fertilizer at 15-0-30."

For more information on Scotts new ProTurf 22-0-22 NK Fairway Fertilizer, call your ProTurf Tech Rep. Or call Scotts direct at 800-543-0006. In Ohio, call collect (513) 644-2900.

Circle No. 171 on Reader Inquiry Card

“Superintendents have been talking about a high quality 1-0-1 product designed for fairways. We’ve been listening.”

Doug Horn, Scotts Research project leader (Fertilizer R&D), talks about new ProTurf 22-0-22 NK Fairway Fertilizer.



LANDSCAPE PROFILE

150 peak and 100 year-round. Its \$3.5 million in revenues came from 400 design/construction jobs and 40 maintenance contracts.

Ireland-Gannon Associates, Inc., East Norwich, N.Y., grossed \$3.5 million from 120 design/construction jobs. Its 25-employee staff grows to 50-60 during peak season. The company has one branch office.

JKB Landscape, Inc., Aurora, Colo., turned 35 maintenance contracts and 20 design/construction jobs into revenues of \$2.8 million in 1986. Its 30 year-round and 70 peak season employees work from one main office.

Johnson Hydro Seeding Corp., Rockville, Md., grossed nearly \$5.3 million from 200 design/construction jobs. One hundred and twenty-four peak season and 31 year-round employees work from four branch offices.

Allen Keesen Landscape, Inc., Denver, Colo., raked in \$3 million from 185 maintenance contracts and 40 design/construction jobs. With one branch office, the company maintains a year-round staff numbering 35-40, which increases to 100 peak season.

LMS Landscape, Inc., Dallas, Tex., grossed \$2.2 million on 150 maintenance contracts and 100 design/construction contracts. From one main office, the company sends out 40-50 staffers year-round, 90-100 peak season.

Lancaster Landscapes, Inc., Arlington, Va., joined the \$10 million-plus club with 275 maintenance contracts and five design/construction jobs. Its 400 peak season and 250 year-round employees work out of nine branch offices.

Larchwood Construction Corp., Holtsville, N.Y., grossed \$4 million from 30 design/construction jobs and 21 maintenance contracts. With one branch office, it employs 15-17 year-round and 70 peak season.

Las Colinas Landscape Services, Inc., Irving, Tx, finishes out the top 10 with \$8.4 million in revenues from 200 maintenance contracts and 50 design/construction jobs. The company's 180 year-round and 250 peak season employees work out of one main office.

Lied's Nursery Co., Inc., Sussex, Wis., grossed \$4.8 million through the work of a 35-person year-round staff, and 100 peak season. The company operates two branch offices. Accurate figures were not available for maintenance and design/construction jobs.

McDugald-Steele, Houston, Tex., with \$2.9 million in revenues did 120 design/construction jobs in 1986, along with having 48 maintenance contracts. The company's 30 year-round and 40 peak season employees work out of one branch office.

Milford Landscape & Maintenance, Milford, Conn., grossed \$3.5 million on 34 design/construction jobs and 45 maintenance contracts. Forty-five year round and 100 peak season employees

work out of one main office.

W.E. Mundy Landscape Contractors, Aurora, Ill., grossed \$2.8 million on a 50-50 split of 100 maintenance and design/construction jobs. With one branch office, the company carries 80 employees peak season, and pares down to 15 year-round.

North Haven Gardens, Dallas, Tex., completed more than 3,000 design/construction jobs, along with having 260 maintenance contracts, earning the company \$3.8 million in gross revenues for 1986. The company has two branches, 110 employees peak season and 85 year-round.

Oak Brook Landscape Co., Oak Brook, Ill., brought in \$3.5 million on 85 maintenance contracts and 35 design/construction jobs. Twenty-one year round and 110 peak season employees work out of four branches.

Oyler Bros. Company, Orlando, Fla., placed ninth with revenues of \$8.5 million from 235 maintenance contracts and 125 design/construction contracts. The company employs 225 year round and 300 peak season while operating four branch offices.

Reinhold Landscape, Inc., Detroit, Mich., enters the Top 50 with revenues of \$4 million from 75 maintenance contracts and 15 design/construction jobs. From one branch office, the company employs 40 year-round and 100 peak season staffers.

SaBell's, Inc., Englewood, Colo., placed 10th last year, but this year moved up to 7th with \$9.5 million in revenues, mostly from 350 design/construction jobs. The company's 60 year-round and 300 peak season employees also worked on 40 maintenance contracts while operating two branch offices.

Alfred L. Simpson & Co., Inc., Atlanta, Ga., operated one branch office while employing a staff of 150 peak season, 100 year round. Its \$5 million in revenues

came from 60 maintenance contracts and 50 design/construction jobs.

R.B. Stout, Inc., Akron, Ohio, brought in revenues of \$3.9 million from 350 maintenance contracts and 100-150 design/construction contracts. The company carries just five employees year-round, but increases the staff to 115-135 peak season.

Vidosh Brothers, Sterling Hts., Mich., ranked a close third this year on \$12.5 million in revenues. The company did 125 design/construction jobs and had 50 maintenance contracts in 1986. Its 80 year-round and 185 peak season employees work out of two branch offices.

White Oak Landscape Co., Inc., Marietta, Ga., finished 250 design construction jobs and had 26 maintenance contracts, giving it \$2.5 million in gross revenues. A main office supports 50 year-round and 78 peak season employees.

EDITOR'S NOTE: In order for this survey to be as comprehensive as possible, the editors need your assistance. Unfortunately, it's tough to reach all 12,000 of you landscape contractors with the survey. Obviously, it is much easier for you to reach us. So, if your gross revenues exceed \$2 million for 1987 and you would like to be a part of next year's survey, please send us a business card with the company name, address and a contact person to whom we can send the survey. If you were left off of this year's survey, we're sorry. We are the first magazine or organization to do this sort of project. Please bear with us as our "Top 50" survey goes through its growing pains.

WT&T

TOP 50

for 1986 selling season

AAA Lawn Industries
Tucker, GA

The Bruce Company
Racine, WI

Cagwin & Dorward
Novato, CA

Chapel Valley Landscape

Woodbine, MD

Clark-Morrell
Lithonia, GA

Contra Costa Landscaping
Martinez, CA

Clarence Davids & Sons
Blue Island, IL

TOP 50 continued on page 44

THE FIRST...4-wheel drive lightweight, 5 gang, tractor reel mower



Standard mower shown

Hydrostatic transmission, diesel, Kubota reliability



Fixed cutting unit,
with anti-scalp rollers.



Floating cutting unit
with front roller



Rear mower assembly detached



Finger-tip controls for easy fold-up
and transportation

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LANDSCAPE PROFILE

Davis Landscaping Contractors
Harrisburg, PA

DeAngelis Landscape
Woodhaven, MI

DeLaurentis Construction Co.
Mamaroneck, NY

East Side Nursery
Groveport, OH

Environmental Industries
Calabasas, CA

Greathouse Landscaping Co.
Nashville, TN

Green Carpet Landscape
Worcester, MA

Greanleaves
Chamblee, GA

Greeno Inc.
Concord, MA

Greentree, Inc.
Stone Mountain, GA

Ground Control Landscape, Inc.
Orlando, FL

The Ground Crew
Arlington, TX

Edmund M. Hayden Landscape
Woodstock, IL

Heyser Landscaping
Norristown, PA

Hillenmeyer's
Lexington, KY

Industrial Landscape Services
San Jose, CA

Ireland-Gannon Associates
East Norwich, NY

JKB Landscape, Inc.
Aurora, CO

Johnson Hydro Seeding Corp.
Rockville, MD 20850

Allen Keesen Landscape
Denver, CO

L&L Maintenance
Santa Clara, CA

LMS Landscape Inc.
Dallas, TX

Lancaster Landscapes, Inc.
Arlington, VA

Larchwood Construction Corp.
Holtsville, NY

Las Colinas Landscape Services,
Inc.
Irving, TX

Lied's Nursery Co.
Sussex, WI

McDugald-Steele Associates
Houston, TX

Milford Landscaping &
Maintenance
Milford, CT

W.E. Mundy Landscape
Contracting
Aurora, IL

North Haven Gardens
Dallas, TX

Oak Brook Landscaping
Oak Brook, IL

Oyler Bros. Co.
Orlando, FL

Plant Control Corp.
Irvine, CA

Reinhold Landscape, Inc.
Detroit, MI

Ruppert Landscaping
Ashton, MD

SaBell's Inc.
Lakewood, CO

Alfred L. Simpson & Co.
Atlanta, GA

SKB Lawn Inc.
Clarkston, GA

R.B. Stout
Akron, OH

Suburban Landscape Assoc.
Davenport, IA

Torre & Bruglio Landscape
Contracting
Mount Clemens, MI

Vidosh Brothers
Sterling Hts., MI

White Oak Landscaping
Marietta, GA



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A SERIES ROCKHOUND



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Skid Steer Mount



(Hydraulic) 3 Point Mount

B SERIES ROCKHOUND



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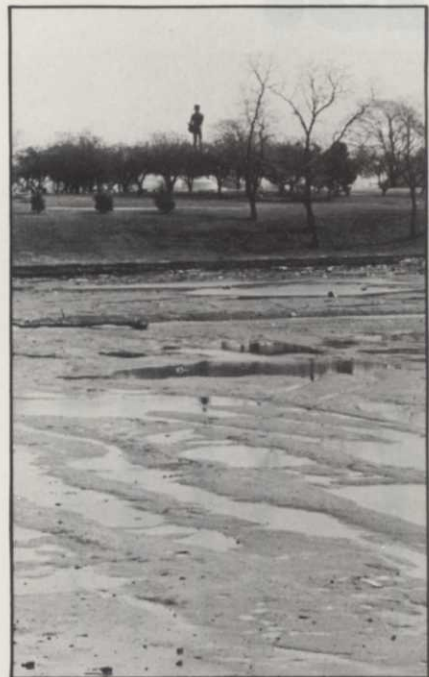
ALL-PRO LANDSCAPERS

The Ruppert Landscape Co. maintains an impressive client list with a 'mission' to be the best.

by Heide Aungst, associate editor



The Ruppert brain trust: Chris Ruppert (left), Chris Davitt (center) and Craig Ruppert. The trio began their turf career mowing lawns in Chevy Chase, Md.



It's easy to drive right past Ruppert Landscape Co.

The quaint red-brick house, which sits off an Ashton, Md., road, doesn't look like an office. It's just another house in the neighborhood.

But the house's history gives it an appeal the surrounding homes don't share.

Baseball Hall-of-Famer Sam Rice of the Washington Senators once lived there. And, if there was such a thing as a landscape Hall of Fame, the Rupperts would probably be inducted.

The Ruppert brothers, Craig 31, and Chris 33, moved their small business to Rice Manor in 1980. At that time they bought just two acres of the land surrounding the home. Today, the company owns almost 10 acres.

Back then, the company made \$440,000. This year the company will do about \$4 million in business.

They've come a long way from the humble beginnings of mowing neighborhood lawns in Chevy Chase, Md., for a few extra bucks. Their list of clientele includes the Saudi Arabian embassy and Vice President George Bush's home in Washington, D.C.

They're award winners, as well. The Rupperts won the Landscape Contractors Association of America's Metropolitan Washington award in 1984 for the Blair Complex, an apartment building.

Billers from the start

Craig started the company in 1971 at 18. Chris joined him the next year. One thing that set the Ruppert brothers apart from other neighborhood kids is that they would bill their customers, like a professional business.

In 1972 they hired a friend's kid brother, age 12, to help with the lawn mowing. Chris Davitt, now 26, has become a key decision-maker in the business.

Craig holds the title of president; Chris Ruppert is director of landscape; and Davitt is director of landscape management.

The three have never let their young ages deter them. In fact, the spirit of youth has perhaps

The "Wetland" project required restoring marshlands destroyed when a tunnel was built. The Ruppert Landscape Company won an award for the project shown here in before and after photos.

contributed to their success.

Take Ruppert's 1985 "Wetlands" project. Other landscape companies in the intensely competitive D.C./Baltimore market turned up their noses at the idea of restoring the marshlands which had been destroyed when the Baltimore Tunnel was built.

The trick was to create a wildlife environment in the tidal waters of Baltimore Harbor.

But the Rupperts, with no knowledge of aquatic plants, said they'd try.

They bought a boat and 25 life-jackets. Wading through mud between high and low tides, the daring company planted 650,000 bare root tubers (plants such as cattails) over 40 acres.

"There's been the attitude here which has prevailed since the beginning that they've never said they can't do a job," says Pat Ruppert, special projects coordinator. That's an attitude Pat had to learn when she married Craig five years ago. "There sure are a lot of dreamers here," she says.

Those dreams should lead to the opening of an office at a second site soon and possibly expanding to a national company someday.

Already, with close to a hundred employees, they're outgrowing the Rice Manor office.

Handling that many employees is something the three admit they didn't do well at first. As long as crews were working hard, it didn't matter if they were happy.

Employee rewards

"We used to get in the truck and curse the boss, who happened to be the Rupperts," Davitt says laughingly.

"Our biggest challenge is people," says Craig. "And we can't grow without people. Keeping everyone happy and productive, that's something we do well."

"We do it well," Chris Ruppert chimes in, "but it's still our biggest challenge."

To meet that challenge, they now give three annual awards for employee achievement. They hold monthly staff meetings, regular training seminars, and a competitive field day including a family cook-out.

They've begun an employee profit-sharing program. On top of that, the Rupperts know every worker personally, and publish "The Ruppert Report," a newsletter printed three times yearly to keep employees informed on projects and



The Rupperts purchased current home Rice Manor along with two acres of land in 1980. Today the company owns 10 adjacent acres.

company growth.

As with most companies, financial management is as important as personnel management. Although the company has printed financial statements since '72, they've learned a lot by trial and error.

"You name it, we've done it wrong," says Craig.

Their list of clientele includes the Saudi Arabian embassy and Vice President George Bush's home in Washington, D.C.

"There were several different times we didn't plan for the growth," Davitt explains.

"The key is not that you make mistakes, but that you learn from them," Chris Ruppert adds.

Running the company has been an education for the brothers.

Craig doesn't have a college degree. Chris has an associate's degree in business. Chris Davitt stopped short of receiving a bachelor's in business.

They learned about plant materials in the field and at seminars. Sometimes, the instructions on a fertilizer bag served as a teaching tool.

Trade associations and using the local extension agent helped the three

make it through some projects. Hiring qualified workers has helped, too.

Many of the Rupperts' managers are educated in related areas, such as horticulture.

In fact, the Rupperts have established a relationship with the University of Mississippi where students work on a co-op basis and then have the opportunity for a full-time position after graduation. They also plan to recruit from other universities.

More installation

But some things won't change as the company grows, the Rupperts emphasize.

For one thing, they will continue to concentrate on landscape installation and management. Landscape design or growing their own plant materials might look promising to some companies, but the Rupperts are wary about spreading themselves too thin.

They will still take on jobs which other companies might refuse.

The company's philosophy, which they call "The Ruppert Mission," is framed in almost every office at Rice Manor. The goal: to be aggressive, efficient and profitable.

"I have to read it every other day," Craig says.

One thing he doesn't need to be reminded of is the company's multi-million dollar figures. With those in hand, the three partners can breathe easily at the end of each day.

Mission accomplished. **WT&T**

Ford shapes the American landscape



Industrial tractors

Big site preparation projects require a tractor with extra strength and performance... and that's exactly what a Ford industrial tractor or tractor-loader offers.

Four heavy-duty diesel models are available with 49 to 63 SAE net horsepower. Tractor-loaders offer up to 4,500 lbs of lift capacity, with single-lever loader control and return-to-dig.

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Ask your dealer about the Ford Extended Service Plan. ESP covers many specific repairs for 36 months or 2,500 operating hours, whichever comes first. At a modest cost, it's smart protection for your rig.



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Hardworking Ford 1000 Series diesel tractors are ideal for a wide range of mowing, loading and site preparation jobs.

Choose from six models, 13 to 32 engine horsepower. Standard equipment includes important features like 540 rpm PTO, Category I 3-point hitch, full-time live hydraulics and a 10 or 12-speed transmission.

Options include front-wheel drive. Hydrostatic or Synchronized Manual Shuttle transmission, depending on model. Creeper speeds. And turf tires. Over 50 matching attachments and implements are available, including 15 different mowers.



Tractor-loaders

You can equip virtually every Ford tractor with a matching Ford loader. These quality loaders combine strength with smooth control. Double-acting lift and dump cylinders are standard. Lift capacities range from 530 to 5,000 pounds. All loaders offer a choice of buckets.

Quik-Tach loader models for many tractors make for great flexibility. You can easily mount or remove the loader to suit the work at hand.

Ford also offers many other attachments for grounds maintenance work: rotary cutters, flail mowers, front and rear blades, landscape rakes, scoops and posthole diggers.

A nearby Ford Tractor dealer is your one-stop source for equipment, parts and service



Industrial backhoes

With a Ford industrial backhoe-loader, you'll be well equipped for trenching, drainpipe installation and other heavy-duty earthmoving jobs.

With Ford you can count on awesome power and precise control. The 14-foot backhoe gives you 9,735 pounds of digging force, and the 12-foot model 8,800 pounds.

Two or four-lever controls offer precise operation. Ten-foot stabilizer spread provides a wide stance. A selection of buckets lets you equip your backhoe for a variety of digging jobs.



New mid-range tractors

The new Ford II models are versatile tractors that make short work of big-area mowing, loading, site preparation and other tough jobs. They're easy to operate and offer excellent all-around performance.

Choose from five diesel models from 34 to 60 maximum net engine horsepower. Standard equipment includes 3-point hitch, independent PTO, and power-assist steering. A new optional cab on selected models makes them an excellent choice for snow removal work.

Other options include front-wheel drive, synchromesh transmission, and turf tires.

Ford also offers 40 and 60 maximum SAE net horsepower low-center-of-gravity Ford II tractors.

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LANDSCAPING FOR THE RICH AND FAMOUS

Tree Land Nurseries in West Palm Beach makes money and wins awards with the best of them. The secret? The trust its clients have for Tree Land.

The green in West Palm Beach, Fla., is not just in the turf and trees.

In an area where money is more abundant than palm trees, Tree Land Nurseries has tapped into the profitable market.

If you drive through the wealthy Palm Beach area, chances are that several of the multi-million dollar mansions you pass are landscaped by Tree Land.

Drive up the southeast coast of Florida, stop to buy a Whopper, and that Burger King probably was landscaped by Tree Land.

And when the Olympic swimming trials take place at Mission Bay in Boca Raton, Tree Land vice-president Raworth Wall will be able to watch in peace: another million-dollar-plus "mission

accomplished."

Tree Land, with accounts from Key West to Orlando, is one of the largest landscape firms in the state. And Wall "couldn't venture a guess" at how many awards the company has won in its 13 years.

"We believe in building a ground base of trust and good relationship with a large company," Wall says. "Most importantly, we make sure we meet deadlines for the C.O. (certificate of occupancy)."

A college-professor look

Wall, a gray-bearded Englishman, looks more like a pipe-smoking professor than a landscape contractor. Educated in horticulture and landscape architecture at the universities of Essex and Cambridge, Wall fell in love with the subtropical

climate in West Palm Beach and settled there.

One thing he loves about Florida is the "instant" landscaping. It's not uncommon for Tree Land to move large trees in full flower at any time of the year. The biggest is a 45-ton ficus tree at Mission Bay, just one of some 4,000 trees moved during that project.

Condos dropping off

The southern landscape market differs from northern primarily in the type of buildings being designed.

Wall says the trend in the Florida building market is total care facilities and rental properties.

The condo market is dropping off. People seem more interested in single-family, self-contained homes, with landscape management provided through an association.

"I'm concerned about the overbuilding of office buildings," he says. "That market is really overbuilt. The price per square foot is going down. We can pretty much negotiate our own terms."

Another difference between the two markets is that Florida landscapers may lose control over what type of trees dot the landscape. A surge in Florida's population has forced the Native Plant Society and the Southern Florida Water Management District to issue a proclamation that all state projects must be landscaped with native trees, since they use less water.

The groups particularly push using the state tree, sabal palm, to maintain the tropical Florida look while conserving water.

"I think a good combination of native and exotic trees should be used...a good mix of pines, palms and flowering trees to add and enhance color," Wall says.

Cutthroat competition

Tree Land employs about 150 people. Wall says the pride and competition among foremen is so strong that he rarely sends two out on the same job.

When projects include Jack Nicklaus' home in Lost Tree, the Palm Beach Polo Club in Wellington (royal host to Prince Charles and Princess Diana when they visited), or a small streetside park on luxurious Worth Avenue, the

Tree Land won a design/build Florida state landscape award for the Radice Corporate Center.

