

RECREATIONAL BENEFITS

Where would sports be without turf? No other plant takes such abuse and still provides solid footing and cushioning. While artificial turf is used on some athletic fields, players generally say it's too hot and it leads to injuries. Managers of athletic fields dislike its maintenance headaches and hefty costs compared with natural turf.

Natural turf usually is used on sports fields because:

- It provides the safest, strongest and least expensive surface for sports.
- It is resilient. Turf absorbs shock without altering the playing surface. Turfgrass leaves and shoots, thatch and soil allow the surface to bounce back.
- It recuperates quickly from injury when cared for properly.
- It provides a natural surface for walking, running and sports.

A variety of sports are played on turf: baseball, cricket, croquet, field hockey, football, golf, lacrosse, lawn bowling, polo, rugby, soccer, softball, and tennis.

EYE APPEAL

How can one judge the beauty turf adds to a landscape? One good way is to walk down a street and compare the eye appeal of nicely manicured lawns to lawns that are unkempt, thin and full of weeds. Note the connection between turf quality and your general impression of the property.

The public recognizes turf's value in home sales. A Gallup Survey found 62 percent of all U.S. homeowners believe investing in lawns and landscaping is as good or better an investment as other home improvements. Proper and well-maintained landscaping can add up to 15 percent to a home's value, according to the survey.

From a design standpoint, turf is a critical part of the landscape. It breaks up plantings. Its green color accents and offers a frame for plantings. Turf is an alternative to concrete and asphalt in urban areas.

THE NEED FOR SPECIALTY PESTICIDES

Proper care is the key that unlocks the benefits of turf. A healthy lawn provides all the benefits already discussed, but a poorly maintained lawn falls short.

Keeping a lawn in top shape requires a combination of pest control and cultural practices, such as mowing, aeration, irrigation and fertilization. All aspects affect lawn quality. If improperly fertilized, irrigated or aerated, turf will be stressed and soon will give way to weed, disease and insect problems.

Timely identification of the cause of problems and beginning treatment, such as correcting fertility, pH or compaction, are key. Next, control measures should be combined with cultural practices and a preventive pest control program.

The best guarantee for a successful lawn is use of specialty pesticides when needed. Without proper controls, you'll miss out on the health and safety benefits turf has to offer.



Managers of athletic fields say natural turf is easier and less costly to maintain than artificial turf.

HEALTHY PLANTS FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Landscaping brings a natural calm to the hurried urban sprawl.

For millions of Americans worn from days spent in sterile business centers, our parks, golf courses and recreational areas lend a breath of fresh air. Businesses increasingly recognize the benefits of providing ornamentals — trees, shrubs, plants and flowers — in and around work areas. Attractive landscapes are linked to above-average labor productivity, lower absenteeism and easier recruitment.

In addition, homeowners view money spent on gardening and landscaping as an investment in their property and personal well-being.

To achieve healthy, thriving ornamental plants, a combination of cultural practices and specialty pesticides is key. Proper application of specialty pesticides increases the benefits gained by timely irrigation, weeding and aeration of the soil.

Plants do more than create an attractive landscape. They absorb heat and provide shade, reducing solar radiation and reflection. Plants can reduce or increase wind speed and enhance dew formation, says Richard Harris of the Department of Environmental Horticulture at the University of California-Davis.

Plants also modify wind patterns by blocking, guiding, deflecting and filtering air flow. Shrubs and ornamentals moderate cold temperatures; they also reduce heat loss and build an insulating buffer of air around buildings.

Well-designed and maintained landscapes provide the benefits of a natural environment with limited worry. Fertilizer applications encourage ground cover growth on slopes, while specialty pesticides keep insect and disease problems in check.

Flowers, shrubs and other ornamental plants add beauty to the landscape, prevent erosion, save energy, help prevent fire damage and increase property values.

EROSION AND POLLUTION CONTROL

Plants intercept rain, softening the impact that might otherwise loosen soil particles and wash them away. Mulch, commonly used in bedding areas, allows water to filter into the soil and slows surface movement; water enters the soil close to where it falls. Plant roots hold soil and further reduce erosion.

Indoor and outdoor plants also reduce air pollutants. Plant tissue, primarily leaves, absorbs gaseous pollutants.

“Plants not only absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen into the atmo-



Plants, flowers and shrubs planted alongside business centers, such as this shopping mall, lend diversity to the landscape.

D I D Y O U K N O W ?

An attractive landscape, complete with shrubs, trees and flowering plants, delivers a number of benefits to property and people alike. Aided by insect- and weed-control measures, healthy ornamentals and plant beds:

- Positively impact the environment. Plants absorb heat and provide shade, as well as modify wind speed and air flow. They filter air pollutants and reduce soil erosion. A well-maintained landscape aids in fire prevention and control.
- Improve people's moods. Studies have found plants positively affect human health by reducing stress and increasing a sense of well-being.
- Increase property values. When selling a home, homeowners can expect to recoup 100 percent to 200 percent of their investment in landscaping. Home buyers pay close attention to landscaping.



Research has found that plants have a positive impact on human health and mood. They serve as stress-reducers and spirit boosters.

sphere, but the plant leaves, roots and soil combine to act as a highly effective air scrubber and cleaning machine," reports Dr. Bill Wolverton of the Plants for Clean Air Council, an advocacy group based in Reston, Va.

PEOPLE AND PLANTS

Humans experience a sense of well-being when around plants, research indicates. Psychologists have found an attractive landscape reduces stress significantly. A Kansas State University study found people begin to relax within five to eight minutes of being placed in a room with a foliage plant.

The positive influence of plants on hospitalized or confined patients is well-documented. One study found hospitalized patients with a view of plants recovered in 7.9 days, compared with 8.7 days for a control group. They also required less potent painkillers, experienced fewer complications and reported a much more positive hospital stay.

Other studies found significant increases in conversation among patients, time spent in the dining room and food intake when flowering plants were placed in hospital dining rooms.

PROPERTY ADVANTAGES

The desire to live closer to nature has prompted many Americans to move to wooded areas. Such scenic places, however, often are prone to wildfires. A well-maintained landscape helps protect residences bordering wooded areas.

"The greener your landscaping is...the better chance it has of stopping a fire from spreading," says T.G. Tomberg, battalion chief of the Santa Barbara, Calif., fire department. "Healthy, green trees, shrubs and lawns are one (defense) that could prevent a house from catching fire."

Additionally, especially in a soft economy, landscaping can raise property values. According to a recent survey of nearly 200 California apprais-



Landscaping, complete with a variety of ornamentals, increases property values and can speed up selling a home by five to six weeks. Attractive landscapes have curb appeal, real estate agents say.

ers and real estate professionals, a well-landscaped home increases property values significantly and can speed up selling time by five to six weeks.

When prospective buyers approach a home, the landscape is among the first things they notice. Real estate agents estimate 95 percent of house shoppers won't even get out of their cars if the home lacks curb appeal. The same applies to business centers trying to lease office space.

Money magazine estimates homeowners can expect to recover 100 percent to 200 percent of landscaping investment when selling their homes.

In addition to visual and environmental benefits, plants handle a variety of other tasks. They can direct pedestrian and vehicular traffic, as well as enhance the appearance of roadways. Likewise, shrubs screen headlight glare from oncoming traffic.

But for many, the greatest benefit is the personal enjoyment landscaping provides. Strategic use of specialty pesticides and mechanical controls ensures healthy plants for today's healthy lifestyles.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

APPEALING TO SIGHT AND SAFETY

Traveling cross-country, we revel in the scenery — the majestic redwoods of the Pacific Northwest, the mighty peaks of the Rocky Mountains, and the beauty of our sculptured roadsides.

While vegetation management, better known as weed and brush control, may not capture the sightseer's fancy, its role in improving efficiency, effectiveness and safety cannot be denied. It is a must for roadsides, plant sites, government installations, railroads and utilities.

At utility sites, for example, vegetation growth controls reduce the number of power outages and shortages, particularly in rainy, windy weather. While mowing and other mechanical methods keep weeds in check, specialty pesticides help achieve the desired results without undue hazard to valuable plants, the public or wildlife — at a cost much lower than mechanical methods alone. In Lowndes County, Miss., for example, a 4-year combination mowing/specialty pesticide roadside program saved the county \$110 per mile annually, compared to mowing alone. In a program that encompassed 650 miles of right-of-way, the annual savings totaled \$71,500.

However, the advantages of specialty pesticide vegetation management go beyond dollars and cents. Reduced frequency of mowing means fewer damaged windshields from flying debris and fewer traveler and worker injuries.

Specialty pesticides, used properly, control noxious weeds that threaten nearby crops and native vegetation. Their appropriate use in controlling undesirable weed growth also allows wildflowers and desired grasses to take root along right-of-ways.

Weed control also enhances travel conditions for the driving public.

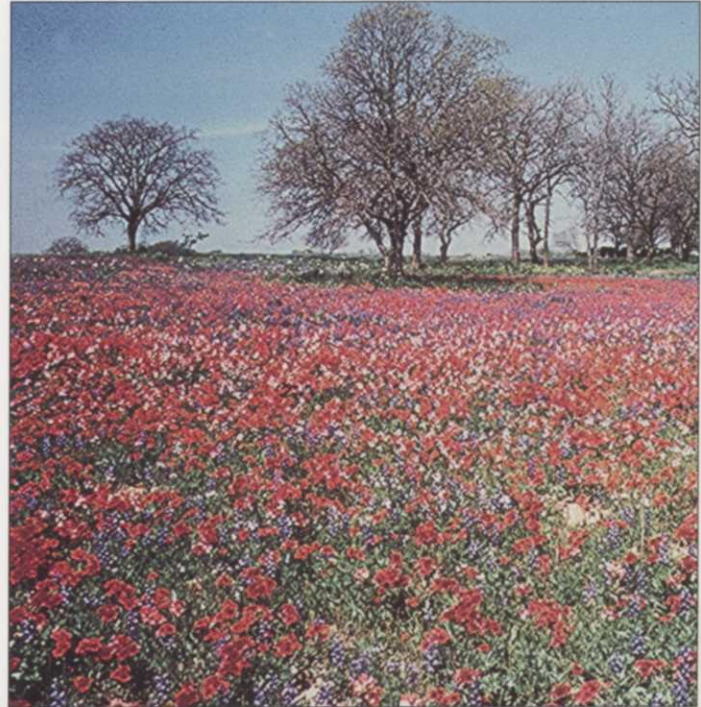
Studies indicate fewer collisions with wildlife occur when roadsides are clear. When vehicles accidentally leave the road, properly maintained roadsides provide needed space for emergency stops. Attractive median plantings also help drivers overcome the tendency to doze during long trips.

Vegetation management makes signs easier to see and lengthens sight distance. Road signs serve as safety warnings and travel guides. Safety hazards occur when such signs are hidden by trees and overgrown vegetation.

Likewise, drivers need good sight distance for safe stops and passing.

Vegetation management improves drainage, helps roads last longer and improves snow drift management. Overgrown weeds along the road shoulder prevent water from draining off rapidly.

While the absence of overgrown weeds may go unnoticed, the public safety and environmental benefits of vegetation management, bolstered by the use of specialty pesticides, are hard to miss.



Specialty pesticides have allowed roadside managers to control noxious weeds and establish eye-catching wildflower programs.

D I D Y O U K N O W ?

Overgrown vegetation, whether alongside roads, railroads or public utilities, is unsightly and often unsafe. Aided by specialty pesticides and mechanical control methods, vegetation management:

- Eliminates noxious weeds. Many weeds, including bindweed, Canadian thistle, johnsongrass and kudzu, pose a serious threat to crops and other valuable plants. Some are poisonous to livestock. Specialty pesticides prevent overgrowth of problem weeds.
- Protects public safety. When well-maintained, vegetation in medians along city streets and highways provides a buffer zone against oncoming traffic. It also improves the scenery and breaks the monotony of a lengthy trip. Road signs are more readily visible when weeds are under control.
- Allows workers easy access to work sites. Controlling weed growth along railroad tracks and plant sites increases worker effectiveness and efficiency.

A Q U A T I C W E E D S

PUTTING A CHOKE HOLD ON PROBLEM PLANTS

A water system is a uniquely balanced and sensitive environment. The vast majority of plant species growing in waters are considered beneficial and only rarely become problems. Natural forces limit the abundance of most native plants.

Many major aquatic weeds, however, have been introduced from foreign lands. In the absence of natural enemies, exotic weeds, such as hydrilla and water hyacinth, grow uncontrolled and rapidly invade new areas. When overgrown weeds interrupt a water system's balance, problems inevitably surface.

Joe Hinkle, environmental specialist, Florida Department of Natural Resources, estimates aquatic plants and algae in natural systems should cover 10 percent to 40 percent of a water body to provide the best habitat for fish and wildlife.

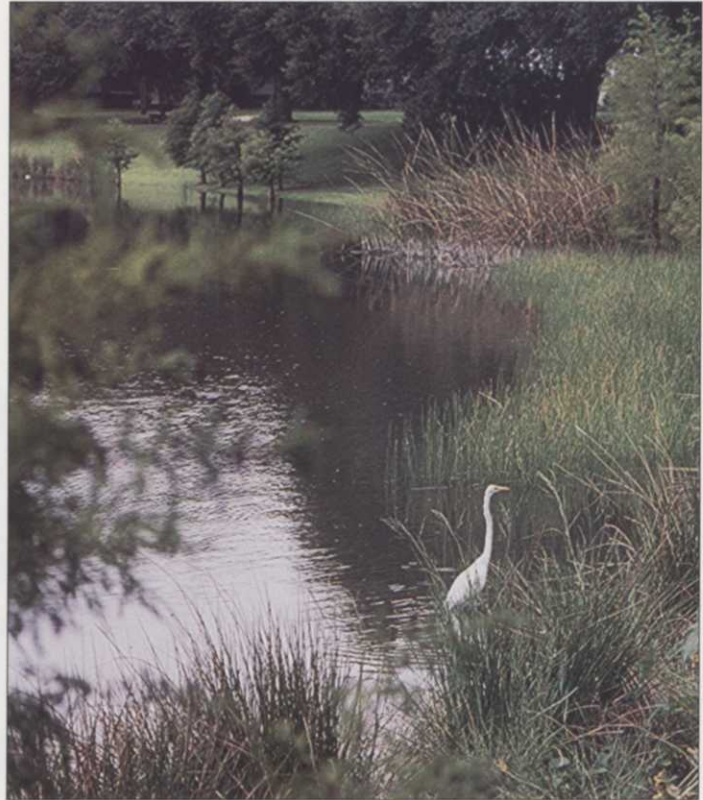
But when much more than 40 percent is covered, the natural water environment often is turned inside out. Overgrown aquatic weeds:

- Clog intake screens and turbines that produce hydroelectric power;
- Provide a breeding site for mosquitoes, carriers of human and animal disease;
- Hinder, or even close, navigation ways;
- Crowd out native vegetation essential for wildlife habitat;
- Restrict recreational activities like fishing, swimming and water skiing;
- Reduce or restrict water flow by as much as 90 percent in irrigation canals needed for crop production and in drainage ditches for flood control; and
- Reduce the value of properties and businesses nearby.

When aquatic problem weeds are managed, the environment responds positively.

Using specialty pesticides, as part of an integrated pest management system, to control unwanted water weeds gives other vegetation — types preferred by fish and beneficial aquatic insects — a better chance to compete. In fact, before aquatic products are registered, they undergo a myriad of tests to ensure no negative impact on fish and other aquatic species.

A well-balanced water body provides food, open areas and cover for waterfowl and other wildlife. Fish populations increase, and invertebrate foods, such as insects, snails and grass shrimp, thrive. A balanced aquatic environment produces oxygen vital to the survival of animal species.



Fish, birds and other animals thrive when bodies of water are free from overgrown vegetation.

D I D Y O U K N O W ?

Specialty pesticides contribute to a cleaner, healthier aquatic environment. By using specialty pesticides to keep aquatic weed growth in check, an aquatic maintenance program:

- Reduces management costs. Managed weed control allows a consistent flow of water into hydroelectric turbines, irrigation canals and drainage ditches. It keeps navigation ways open.
- Reduces complaints from the public. Weed control helps maintain strong property values for lakefront property owners.
- Increases recreational use and revenues. Weed control reduces fluctuations in water temperature, oxygen and pH levels, thus preventing fish kills.

Sport fish populations thrive in well-maintained bodies of water. Lake residents and their guests welcome the opportunity to swim, ski and enjoy other activities in weed-free water.



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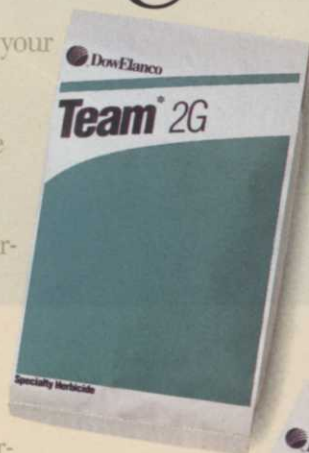
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for people interested in



Marketing, public relations: Beyond word-of-mouth

The best marketing programs are strategically planned to give your company the best possible exposure to the right audience.

■ Marketing and public relations are the most multi-faceted of business activities.

Listen to any trade show speech on marketing: the speaker asks, "What is marketing, what is public relations?" He'll take just about any answer, from free samples to door-to-door canvassing to presentations in city shopping malls.

Public relations is the great enigma of all communications disciplines, primarily because many people feel it's nearly impossible to judge the value and effectiveness of a public relations campaign.

Simply stated, marketing is the act of getting your company and its product in front of the buying public. Public relations involves image building and image maintenance in a community, city, state, or even nation.

Business consultants Michael Phillips and Salli Rasberry, authors of *Marketing Without Advertising* (Nolo Press, Berkeley, Calif., 1986), tell us that a specific marketing action plan includes four basic elements:

- The product you sell or service you perform;
- The people you already know who are in a good position to recommend your business to their friends and acquaintances;
- The list of marketing actions and events that will stimulate the people on your list to actually make recommendations; and
- A calendar of events to make your plan take flight within a specified time frame.

"Be aware," say Phillips and Rasberry, "that your general objective in designing a good marketing plan is to give your customers, associates and prospects a sense of participation in your business. When done well, this allows you to share your sense of excitement about your business at the same time that you enhance trust in your business."

A marketing action plan, according to the authors, falls into three categories: direct, parallel, and peer-based.

A landscaping company can market directly by inviting the

public to tour some of its best projects. Some of the bigger nursery companies hold annual field days for their industry customers, in a small trade show format.

A parallel marketing plan might include having some of your best customers' home landscapes or commercial sites appear in the company brochure or newsletter.

Peer-based marketing includes participation in the local landscapers' association.

If a friend's company can't handle a certain job, he's likely to think of you and refer the customer to your company. There's also no better way to learn what's going on in the business than mingling at association functions.

Market diversity—"In Wisconsin in the last few years, we've seen an interest in the use of perennials, nightlighting, and low-maintenance landscapes," says David J. Frank, president of David J. Frank Landscape Contracting in Germantown, Wisc. "We have to consider that in our ad copy; these new trends have to be supported by ad programs."

John Hooks, president of Post Properties in Atlanta, believes in promoting the value of landscape in out-of-the-way areas, like between buildings, or other unused areas. "It's not just dead space," says Hooks. "Convince people to turn those spaces into gazebos or gardens."

Frank believes the spoken word can lose its effectiveness over time, thanks to companies that promise the moon and don't deliver. "How frequently have you heard terms like 'competitive pricing,'



Frank: Tell them what you do better than anyone in your market.

'high quality,' and 'good service?'" asks Frank. "It's almost insulting at times because even the worst operator is talking about high quality products and services. It's terribly important that we demonstrate what we can do for the customer."

According to Frank, company marketing literature should say what you do better than other

Showing off at home shows: put your best work forward.

(Photo courtesy of David J. Frank)

