

THALONIL™ SHOCKED THE COMPETITION

For years, the competition has been saying there'd never be another turf and ornamental fungicide that could stand up to their chlorothalonil. *They were wrong.* And Thalonil™ proved it in major university studies.

In fact, the results of those studies did a lot more than just shock the competition. Those results also convinced a lot of professionals to switch to Thalonil™ 90DF.

With Thalonil, you get the same proven control of costly diseases—including dollar spot, brown patch, snow mold and many, many more—that you've always gotten. You also get Thalonil's superior safety, handling and storage characteristics at the same time.

Plus, this season Thalonil is also available in new water soluble packets. New Thalonil™ 90DF WSP offers you extra convenience as well as added safety benefits for both the applicator and the environment.

But the biggest shock of all is that you can get all of these Thalonil extras *and* a fair deal at the same time. Talk to Terra for Thalonil and all of your professional product needs. Call 1-800-831-1002, Ext. 225, for the location nearest you.



Always Read and Follow Label Directions.

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LM REPORTS

Tips for seeding with overseeders

Work can be done manually, but seeders and overseeders make the job more time-efficient.

■ By following a few well-established seeding procedures, a turfgrass manager improves the likelihood of establishing a strong stand of turfgrass. This is equally true for golf courses, football fields or home lawns.

The Guide to Seed & Sod in the United States and Canada by Dr. Richard Hurley and Marie Pompei of Lofts Seed offers the following seeding tips:

1) Prepare a good, crumbly seed bed: till 6 to 8 inches deep. Firm and level well after tilling.

2) Fortify the seed bed with fertilizer and lime. A soil test is the surest way to establish proper rates. Make applications uniformly, work into top 3/4 inches of soil.

3) After all materials have been worked in, firm up the soil by rolling.

4) With a wide-toothed rake or tine-harrow, rake the area into a crumbly state with about an inch of loose soil at the surface.

5) Apply the seed.

6) Lightly rake the seed into the soil. Seed needs to be bedded in the soil to germinate quickly and uniformly.

7) Optional mulching with straw or salt hay is beneficial, especially on sloping areas to hold soil and seed in place in heavy rain or during watering.

8) In the absence of rain, the newly seeded area should be watered 2-3 times daily.

Fortunately, turfgrass managers don't have to



The Bluebird International seeder holds about 20 lbs. of seed.

Befco models fit tractors from 26-60 hp and 18-40 hp.



Overseeding, pesticide injection or fertilizing can be done with the Dol overseeder.

do all this work manually. They can look to help from the manufacturers and suppliers of an assortment of seeders, some small enough to seed the tiniest lawns, others able to easily seed acres in a day. (See accompanying chart.)

Check with your seed supplier for recommended seeding rates. Different varieties of turfgrass require different rates.

—Ron Hall



Hahn's VCS-1 holds 750 cubic inches of seed.

Bunton models seed at 9 mph, with accurate control of seed flow.



PROFESSIONAL TURFGRASS SEEDERS

Company	Model	Features
BEFCO INC. Circle No. 301	Green-Rite II and III	Model I: one-pass, multipurpose seeder, aerator, for tractors from 25-60 hp. Model II: overseeder, aerator, 58" work width, 18-40 hp tractors.
BLUEBIRD INTERNATIONAL INC. Circle No. 302	3 Lawn Seeders	Walk behind, 5 hp or 7 hp B&S; seed hopper holds about 20 lbs. of seed; openings line up with Delta Reel blades.
BRILLION IRON WORKS INC. Circle No. 303	Turfmaker	11 models from 5'4" to 12' seeding widths; feed rolls fluted; precise metering of fine seeds; high-strength rollers; big capacity boxes.
BUNTON CO. Circle No. 304	BL0S59-DD, BL0S79-DD	59" and 70" widths; controls seed rates very accurately; individually mounted coulters; large hopper; can seed at 9 mph.
CUSHMAN RANSOMES RYAN Circle No 305	Mataway Overseeder/Dethatcher	Heavy-duty snap-out reels; adjustable seeding two-inch spacing; seed flow stops automatically when crossing sidewalks and driveways.
DAVENPORT SEED CORP. Circle No. 306	T-7II Multi-Purpose	Hand-operated broadcast spreader for pros; direct drive; full-view flow control knob; stainless interior parts, interior agitator.
DOL BROTHERS LTD. Circle No. 307	301 (48") and 210 (72")	5-in-1 turf solution: overseeding, pesticide-insecticide injection, fertilizer application, polymer granule placement, detaching/aerating.
EMREX, INC. Circle No. 308	Verti-Seed	For 17 hp tractor; PTO driven; 33" working width; 3 cu.ft. hopper; adjustable for all turf seed; smooth cutting discs, 21 elements.
GANDY CO. Circle No. 309	Dethatcher/Overseeder	For tractors 18 hp and up; cutter blades on 2-inch spacing; hopper capacity 125 lbs.; snap-off stainless bottom & slide; 24 seeding outlets.
GARBER SEEDER Circle No. 310	Seed Easy Seeders	PTO tractor, electric ATV broadcast seeders.
HAHN, INC. Circle No. 311	VCS-1 Verti-Cut	Seeder attachment: 750 cubic inches, 20-gauge sheet steel, agitator, hopper on/off controls.
JACOBSEN Circle No. 312	Aero King 1321	21-inch seeding/verticutting width; covers 23,000 sq. ft. per hour; double-bin seeder for separate varieties; vertical mowing/dethatching.
LAND PRIDE Circle No. 313	Overseeders, Primary Seeder	48" & 72" Overseeders, 72" Primary Seeder; metering for turfgrass seeds; adjustments for seeding depth, rates; roller pressure or tickler line pressure; all-welded steel box.
LESCO INC. Circle No. 314	Renovator 20	Seeder/slicer/dethatcher; 20" working width; compact; two full-width finishing brushes; spring-loaded reverse.
SPYKER SPREADER WORKS Circle No. 315	Walk behind seeders/spreaders	Dial-A-Matic rate control; vibrating rate gate; rotary agitators; frames finished in baked-on epoxy enamel.
WORKSAVER INC. Circle No. 316	Broadcast seeder/spreaders	Polyethylene and metal hoppers available; electric and PTO-driven; several sizes.

Source: LM mail/phone survey, April 1994

Are you assuming customers are happy?



After servicing a property, prepare a report for the customer.

Photo courtesy Senske Lawn & Tree Care

by Ed & Todd Wandtke

■ Customer satisfaction requires regular confirmation. Most companies, however, do not take the time; rather, they "assume" the customer likes the job because he or she is paying the bill.

Now that the spring rush is over, take the time to check up on how well you are meeting your customers' expectations of your services.

You don't have to be a mind reader to understand what the customer wants. You do need to ask the right questions. And expectations will vary by the type of customer and the way a property is being used. Until you learn what the customer wants from your service, it will be difficult to measure if you are delivering it.

Here are some tips you should consider, depending on the type of service you offer, and to whom you offer it.

Commercial customers:

1) Review your customer sales records first. Dig into them to find the objective the customer had in choosing you and the type of service he or she expects you to perform. Under ideal conditions, this information should be evident from sales contacts or from written information given to you when you obtained the bid packet.

You might have to look carefully, though: more than 90 percent of the companies we have observed in the last five years do not have this information in their customer contact or sales files. If you have this information on file, congratulations—you're one of the elite 10 percent.

2) Plan site visits. Call the person who's contracting the job and plan to walk the property with the buyer and your contact. This is an opportunity to obtain immediate feedback on the quality of your service.

Let the customer know that this is part of your continuing customer relationship and satisfaction pulse check.

Some companies provide a checklist for the customer to complete, and then compare it to the one they complete at the same time. Then, stop and discuss variances between your two views.

3) Provide written reports and feedback. Provide a report on the property after every visit. This lets the customer know what problems you see. Either the customer or you can follow up on your appropriate recommendations.

Don't be afraid to critique your own shortcomings. The customer likes to know that you see the same problem that might be troubling him or her.

Include comments on curb appeal, turf

color, plant and tree appearance, groundcover, weed control, mowing patterns and flower beds. Add comments on trash, turf renovation, plant placement and irrigation needs also often helps increase the value to the customer of the written report.

Residential customers:

Unlike commercial customers, residential customers will frequently phone when they have a concern. Effective handling of the ensuing service call is critical in maintaining a satisfied customer. Here are some other tips:

1) Communicate. Talk to your customer each time you service the property. This means that your service personnel must be prepared with questions for the property owner, and the questions need to be open-ended (not just "yes" or "no").

Don't expect customers to be specific unless you ask the right questions. You can expect to get three questions in, before the customer loses interest.

Employees need to be trained as effective listeners. After contact with a customer, a written form should be prepared. Act on any follow-up items and keep the form in the customer's file.

2) Survey customers. Enclose a reply card asking for comments. When few replies are received, the company believes that customers are satisfied.

Or, hire a professional research firm to contact customers for you. These professional researchers can ask questions that provide information about specific customer attitudes. This method can also provide insight into ways you can expand your service offerings.

The cost of an outside group to perform the survey will range from \$2,500 to \$5,000, depending on the number of questions and the number of customers to be surveyed.

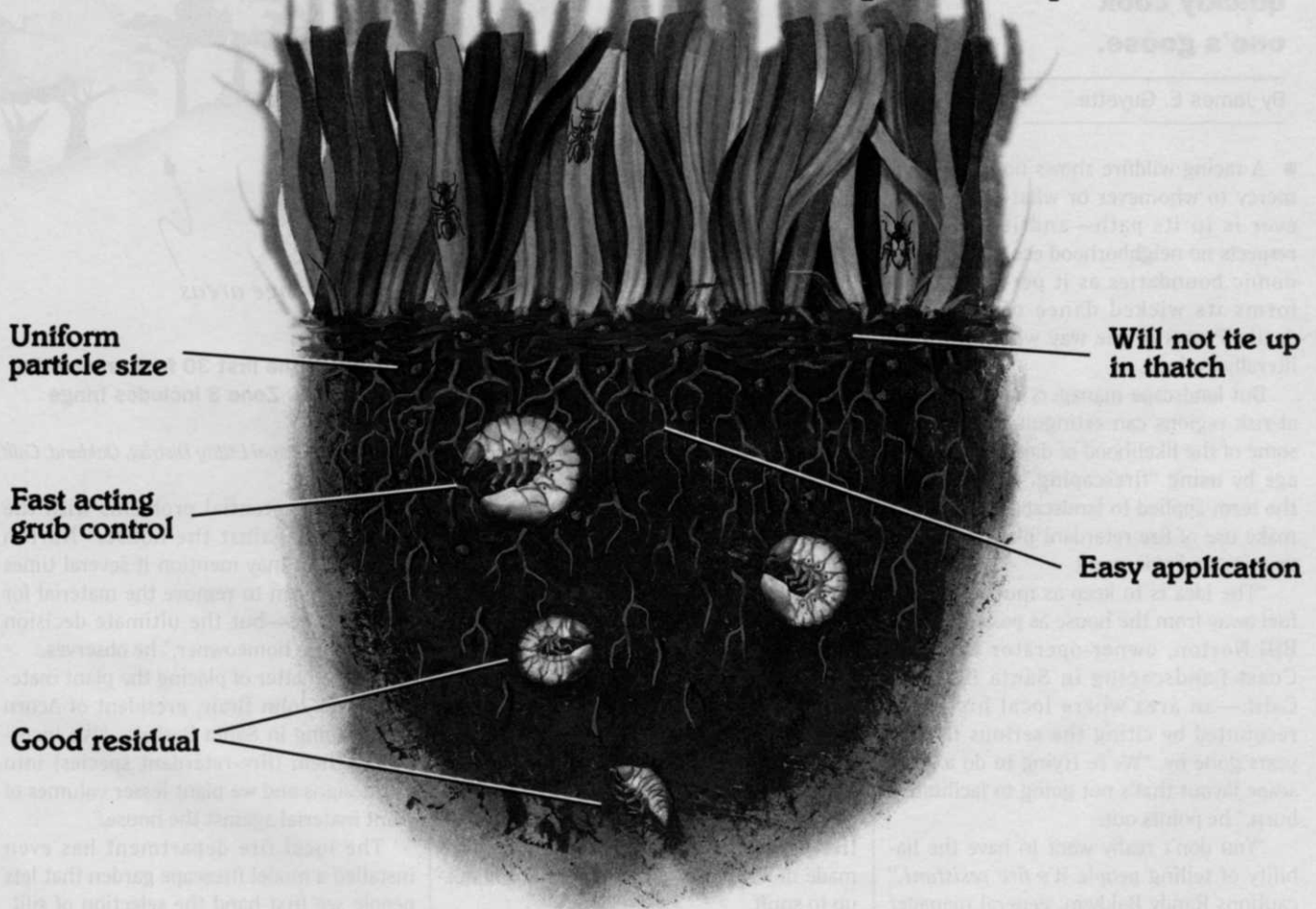
3) Phone check-ups. Customers are not always available when the services are being performed. Call them (within a reasonable time after the service) for input. These calls can be made by the service person, or by an office employee. If timely, the check-ups can save a customer or resolve a problem before it becomes a crisis.

Customer retention levels continue to increase for companies that have implemented these few tips, which will help you earn customer loyalty.

—To contact the authors for more information about this and other business subjects, write Wandtke & Associates, 2586 Oakstone Dr., Columbus, OH 43231; or phone (614) 891-3111.

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Circle No. 102 on Reader Inquiry Card

'Firescaping' an extra hedge from damage in dry, dangerous weather

Landscapers and homeowners often make unwise planting decisions. A seemingly simple choice of gardening strategy can quickly cook one's goose.

By James E. Guyette

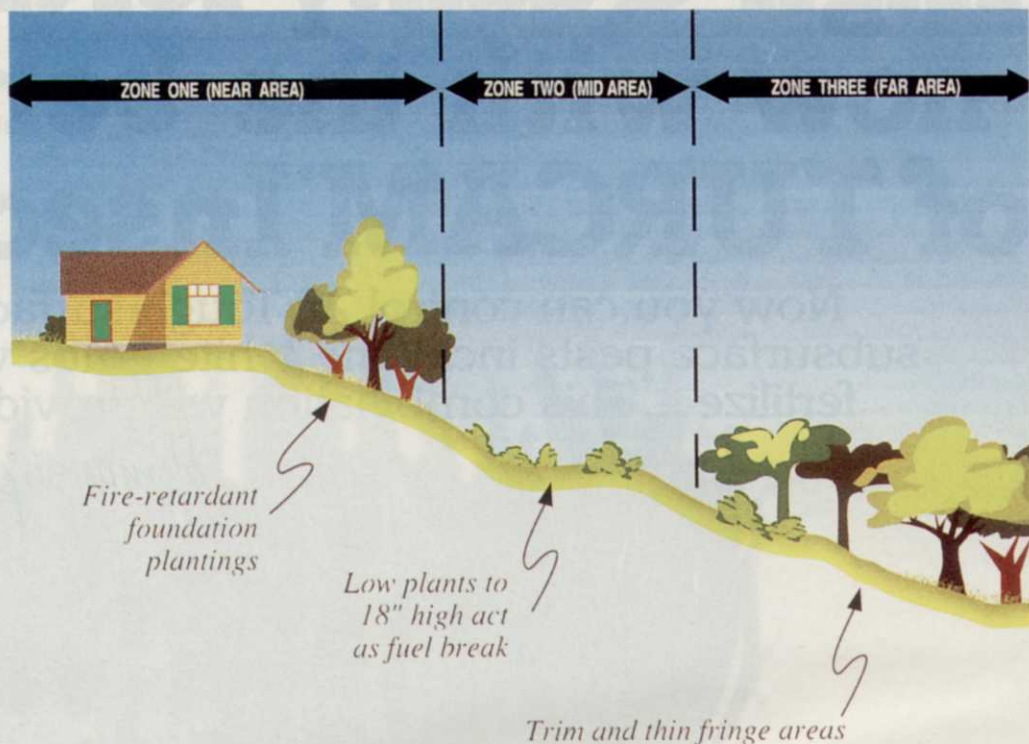
■ A racing wildfire shows no mercy to whomever or whatever is in its path—and it respects no neighborhood economic boundaries as it performs its wicked dance of death. Plants in the way will literally explode.

But landscape managers in at-risk regions can extinguish some of the likelihood of damage by using "firescaping"—the term applied to landscape designs that make use of fire-retardant plants, prudent pruning and placement.

"The idea is to keep as much potential fuel away from the house as possible," says Bill Norton, owner-operator of South Coast Landscaping in Santa Barbara, Calif.—an area where local history is recounted by citing the serious fires of years gone by. "We're trying to do a landscape layout that's not going to facilitate a burn," he points out.

"You don't really want to have the liability of telling people it's *fire resistant*," cautions Randy Baldwin, general manager at Santa Barbara's San Marcus Growers. "What you are doing is recommending plants that are less likely to carry the fire."

The specific species can vary in any given situation, but in general a fire-retardant plant will have a high moisture content and its growing pattern will hug the ground. Oddly enough, often a plant that's fire-retardant will also be drought-resis-



Fire protection 'zones' may reduce or prevent damage. Zone 1 is the first 30 feet around the house. Zone 2 covers the next 30-to-70 feet away from the house. Zone 3 includes fringe areas adjacent to wildlands or open space.

(Chart materials page 21 and this photo originally produced by the East Bay Municipal Utility District, Oakland, Calif.)

tant. "Most of your succulents are very efficient water users," says Baldwin.

"You have to embrace the whole concept of low-fuel and proper pruning" when selling such a service to residents, Baldwin notes. "No one really calls up and says, 'Give us your firescape mix,' but interest does pick up after a fire."

Money to burn—While the mostly upscale housing stock in rugged Santa Barbara adheres to stringent fire-resistant design requirements mandated by authorities, these construction aspects can be made moot in a moment if the yard is not up to snuff.

"Landscapers and homeowners are the biggest abusers" when it comes to making unwise planting decisions, says Norton. A seemingly simple choice of gardening strategy can quickly cook one's goose when the sky gets black with smoke.

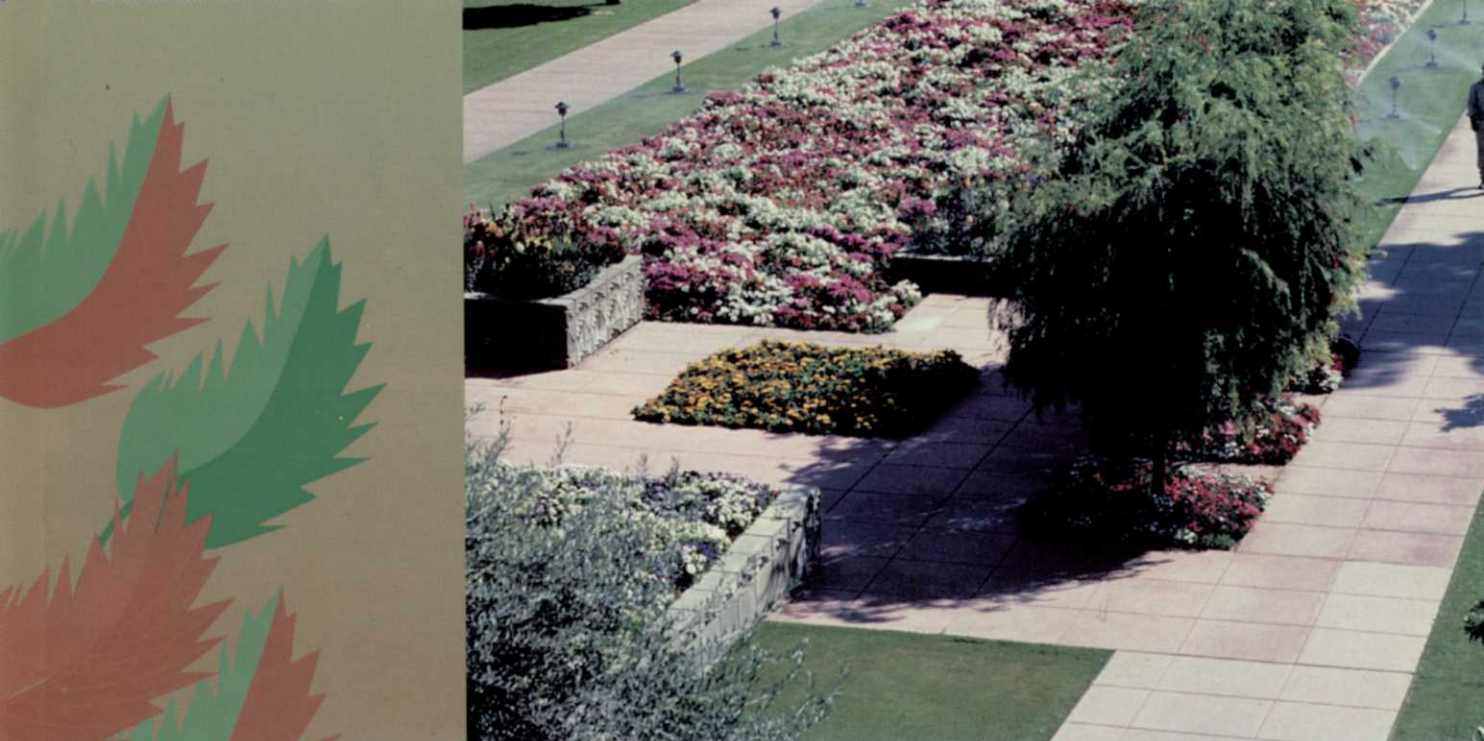
Landscape managers in any fire-prone region need to make this a priority. "Even in our maintenance practices we discuss

and reveal potential problems with the foliage up against the house," Norton reports. "We may mention it several times and urge them to remove the material for safety's sake—but the ultimate decision lies with the homeowner," he observes.

"It's a matter of placing the plant material," says John Brair, president of Acorn Landscaping in Santa Barbara. "We incorporate them (fire-retardant species) into our designs and we plant lesser volumes of plant material against the house."

The local fire department has even installed a model firescape garden that lets people see first-hand the selection of suitable materials. Four zones are mapped out over a 200-foot line. Zone One is closest to the house and Zone Four the farthest away. Zone One stretches 30 feet. (From 30 feet away, a wildfire can ignite a piece of furniture setting behind a window inside a house.)

Pumping up—Selling this preventive *continued on page 21*



LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

new products 1995



new products 1995 **LANDSCAPE**



MERIT 75 WSP/Miles Specialty Products

MERIT 75 WSP insecticide is a new broad-spectrum, systemic insecticide that is extremely effective at very low use rates. It offers less risk to applicators, man and the environment. Imidacloprid, the active ingredient in MERIT, delivers superior season-long control of turf and ornamental insects without the need for repeated applications. *Circle No. 161 on Reader Inquiry Card*

TORO HYDRO-DRIVE MODEL 30190

This incredible machine, the Toro Hydro-Drive, offers an 18 HP Kohler engine that gives you the muscle you need for the toughest jobs. T-bar-controlled instant forward and reverse virtually eliminates slippage on hillsides and on wet grass. The Toro ProLine Hydro-Drive delivers precise speed control up to 6 mph. Oil cooler maintains optimum hydrostatic oil temperature, for longer life. Noise is kept to a minimum with a lower engine and blade speed and a new muffler design. *Circle No. 162 on Reader Inquiry Card*



JACOBSEN HR-5111 ROTARY MOWER

The high production HR-5111 with go-anywhere 4WD features individual hydraulic motors to drive each blade for unmatched cutting power and an 11' cut that rivals reel performance. Design eliminates time-consuming routine deck drive maintenance. For more information, contact your Jacobsen dealer today. *Circle No. 160 on Reader Inquiry Card*



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Circle No. 163 on Reader Inquiry Card

THALONIL 90DF WSP

Thalonil 90DF WSP controls fungal disease in turf and ornamentals and is safer for you and the environment than any other chlorothalonil on the market today. Water-soluble packets are easy to use, reduce your risk of chemical exposure, and eliminate the hassles of jugs. For more information, talk to Terra at 1-800-831-1002, Ext. 225. *Circle No. 164 on Reader Inquiry Card*



MANAGEMENT



ACCLAIM® 1EC HERBICIDE

Acclaim® 1EC Herbicide is not only one of the most effective, economical post-emergence herbicides for crabgrass and grassy weed control, it's one of the most flexible. Acclaim can be used alone or tankmixed with pre-emergence grass herbicide, insecticide, fungicide or broadleaf herbicide. When midsummer escapes occur, Acclaim will stop crabgrass from the 1-leaf stage to just prior to seed head formation.

Circle No. 165 on Reader Inquiry Card



KUBOTA GF1800 FRONT MOWER

The 4WD GF1800's unique two-pedal 2WD/4WD change-over process allows the operator to switch between drives by stepping on either the 4WD Lock Pedal or 4WD Release Pedal. The GF1800 provides exceptional turn performance and boasts a turning radius of 17.3 inches. With the bevel-gear 4WD system in the rear axle, the GF1800 delivers a constant driving force and smooth power transfer to the wheels, even during sharp turns.

Hydrostatic transmission eliminates shifting, with speed and forward/reverse changes controlled by the same single foot pedal. The GF1800 4WD features an 8.4-mph maximum forward traveling speed and an 4.1-mph maximum reverse speed. The GF1800 offers a choice of three shaft-driven, off-set mowers: a 48-inch mulching rear-discharge mower, 54-inch side-discharge mower or 60-inch side-discharge mower. Circle No. 169 on Reader Inquiry Card



JOHN DEERE FRONT MOWER

The 20-hp F725 is powered by a liquid-cooled Kawasaki overhead valve engine for quiet operation, consistent performance in hot weather, and long engine life. With a 54-inch mower deck, it can improve productivity by 20 to 50 percent. The 17.5 hp model F710 is air-cooled and teamed with a 48-inch mower. Both units include industry exclusive—hydrostatic transmission controlled by two foot pedals; hydraulic weight transfer system to improve traction of the drive wheels; differential lock; and a single crank handle to adjust cutting height. Power steering is standard.

Circle No. 166 on Reader Inquiry Card

MILL CREEK MANUFACTURING COMPANY

A line of tow-behind coring aerators has been introduced by Millcreek Manufacturing Company. Available for the 36" and 54" wide economy models and the 42", 63" and 84" wide heavy-duty models.

The heavy-duty models can be raised and lowered from the tractor seat by a mechanical device — no hydraulics needed.

Circle No. 167 on Reader Inquiry Card



ROUNDUP® DRY PAK HERBICIDE

The proven weed control performance of Roundup® herbicide is now available in a convenient, granular formulation in pre-measured packs that offer fast, easy and accurate mixing. Each packet of Roundup® Dry Pak contains enough herbicide for 1 gallon of finished spray solution. Dry Pak is ideal for use in backpack sprayers for applications around trees, along fence lines, around buildings and next to sidewalks. Roundup® Dry Pak comes in boxes of 25 packs, making it convenient to store, transport and ration out to workers. For more information about Dry Pak, see your herbicide supplies or call Monsanto Company at 1-800-332-3111 for the name of a local dealer/distributor.

Circle No. 168 on Reader Inquiry Card



new products 1995

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT



PRIMO® FROM CIBA

Primo®, a turf management tool from Ciba, reduces turf growth by 50% for up to four weeks. Labeled for warm-and cool-season grasses, Primo saves you time—mowing is faster and/or less frequent. Primo reduces clipping, makes grass denser and darker color green. For more information, contact your local distributor.

Circle No. 171 on Reader Inquiry Card



ANDERSONS BARRICADE® PLUS FERTILIZER

"Dial In" Length of Control
The active ingredient BARRICADE, offers turf managers the longest pre-emergence herbicide residual, with up to eight months of control. Based on applied rates, applicators can determine the length of control through a single application (follow Andersons recommendations by region).

Circle No. 172 on Reader Inquiry Card

THE AGGRESSOR™ FROM ECHO

Powered by 21.2 cc engine, it removes limbs quickly, easily and safely. The blade provides an extremely smooth cut to help protect trees from disease and moisture. It cuts on both the forward and reverse stroke for faster cutting. A hook allows the user to pull down stubborn cut branches. The 71-inch, heavy-duty shaft is the ideal length from a balance and reach standpoint. This new unit is only 11.3 pounds. For more information contact Echo Incorporated, 400 Oakwood Road, Lake Zurich, Illinois 60047.

Circle No. 173 on Reader Inquiry Card



LOFTS, INC.

Southshore Creeping Bentgrass, available from Lofts Seed, was developed through a breeding program of Dr. Richard Hurley, Lofts' Research Director, in cooperation with Rutgers University. Southshore produces a dense, upright turf and exhibits a medium-fine texture that produces less grain. In NTEP trials, Southshore displays excellent resistance to brown patch and excellent overall turf quality.

Circle No. 170 on Reader Inquiry Card



LESCO'S LCR-7400 COMMERCIAL ROTARY MOWER

Steep hills or wet conditions are no problem for the LCR-7400, which features automatic or full-time four-wheel drive. Powered by a proven and reliable Perkins 27 HP diesel, the LCR-7400 has a two-speed transmission with differential lock. Independent turn-assist brakes allow tight radius turns with minimal turf damage. Its high-lift deck easily clears curbs and simplifies transport. Its 60- or 72-inch deck flips vertically, making it easy to service. For a demonstration contact your LESCO Sales Representative or call (800) 321-5325 (in Cleveland, 333-9250).

Circle No. 174 on Reader Inquiry Card