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[www.cp.us.novartis.com](http://www.cp.us.novartis.com)



## Merger forms largest ag-chem business in world

**BASEL, SWITZERLAND** – AstraZeneca PLC, the Anglo-Swedish pharmaceutical company, and Swiss drug giant Novartis AG have unveiled a merger and spinoff of their agricultural-chemical business.

The merger, which is still waiting for shareholder and regulatory approval, will be spun off and combined into a new, separately traded concern called Syngenta. Syngenta would be the biggest agrochemical business in the world, with sales of \$7.9 billion. It would have a potential stock market value of \$15 to \$20 billion.

"We chose to combine with AstraZeneca because it has the ideal complement to our product portfolio, a good global presence and good research and development platform," says Kay Carter, spokeswoman for Novartis.

Ed Ready, manager of environmental affairs for AstraZeneca, elaborated on the advantage gained in the research and development department. "It's enormously expensive to bring new pesticides to the market. If you don't have a big enough company that generates enough sales revenue, you can't play in this game," he says.

Ready also said that the merger will not only create the largest ag-chem business in the world but the only one that is free-standing. "In other companies, strategic decisions have to be made regarding different

parts of the company. We will be able to make those decisions without worrying about how they will affect, say, the pharmaceuticals division."

The Novartis-AstraZeneca move is likely to trigger further consolidation within the \$30 billion-a-year agrochemical in-

dustry. Novartis itself is the product of a 1997 merger between Ciba and Sandoz. Using that particular merger as an example, Carter doesn't feel that being large means less customer service. "In 1997, we became one of the largest crop protection companies in the

world," she says. "So we're already large, and, if you look at our record, our customers rank us as number one. We've never lost that position, and I don't think that will happen with Syngenta."

-Jason Stahl

## People & companies



**Valley Crest** promoted **Neville Laatsch** to vice president and

branch manager of its Water Features and Theming Division.

**David Heegard** has joined **Pursell Technologies** as di-



rector of professional sales. The company also

named **Tim Lacy** as director of customer and facility development.

**John Bresnahan** has joined **AgriBioTech** as technical sales representative for its ABT/Woburn, MA facility.

For the third straight year, **CMX Group** has been ranked among the top en-

gineering firms of the Southwest by Southwest Contractor Magazine.

**Roger Rew** has been named as **LasTec's** new plant manager.

**Roots Inc.** promoted **Ed Long** to vice president of sales for Independent Distributors, USA. **Jim Hughes** has been named as West Coast territory manager.

**Aquascape Designs**, which launched a national mail order business selling professional pond kits to contractors and retailers, has been named one of the fastest-growing companies in the country by Inc. magazine.

**The Pavestone Company** recently opened two new manufacturing facilities in Chattanooga, TN, and San Marcos, TX. The company now has 10 manufacturing facilities and over 700 employees serving 33 states.

**Jo Layman** has joined **GreenScapes** of Columbus, OH as production specialist in customer service and maintenance. **Angie Mounts** also joined the company as customer service representative. Promotions at the company include **Adam Shirkey** to landscape foreman, **David Haberman** to maintenance foreman, **Jerry Klusty** to assistant production manager and **Teri Pace** to assistant nursery manager.

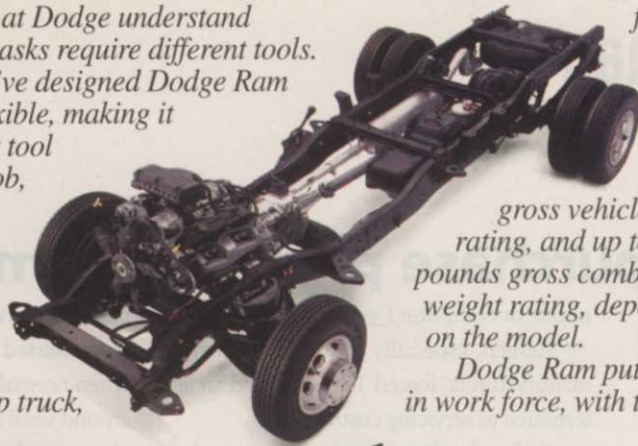
**Toro/Irritrol Systems** promoted **Mike Ochoa** to senior marketing manager of Irritrol Systems. **Brad White** was promoted to national specification sales manager, **Steve Snow** to director of sales and marketing, golf, **Rex Dixon** to director of sales and marketing, Irritrol Systems, and **Dirk Lenie** to director of sales and marketing, Toro res/com.



The people at Dodge understand different tasks require different tools. So they've designed Dodge Ram to be flexible, making it the right tool for the job,

whichever the job. And Ram doesn't walk away from hard work. In fact, Ram Pickups are the longest-lasting pickups on the road.\*

From pickup to dump truck,



from wrecker to stake truck to flatbed utility, Ram's frame was designed to handle a seriously heavy work load. You get up to 11,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, and up to 20,000 pounds gross combination weight rating, depending on the model.

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# Labor leaders.



Magnum® engine lineup. Optional engines include two proven workhorse V-8s, plus the most powerful V-10 in a

full-size pickup. Ram also offers an absolute diesel monster: the 24-valve Cummins Turbo engine with 460 lb-ft of torque.

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power driver seat, leather trim, and fold-down business console. In the midst of a busy day, they can help you take some of the load off.

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customers. It offers a choice of special cash allowances, or select upfit packages.\*\* We also offer flexible lease options that allow customers to tailor-make a deal based on individual needs.

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Dodge Ram  Different.

Call toll-free 1-877-ON-THE-JOB or visit [www.4adodge.com](http://www.4adodge.com)

\*Based on percentage of 7/89-7/98 new pickup registrations still registered on 7/1/98. Data source: The Polk Company. \*\*Upfitters are solely responsible for after-market modifications and equipment. Always use seat belts. Remember a backseat is the safest place for children. Properly secure all cargo.

## Turfco's direct purchase plan starts smoothly

MINNEAPOLIS, MN — Commercial maintenance professionals can buy equipment from Turfco Mfg. without going through dealers, thanks to a new direct purchase program started this past November.

The program was born out of the loss of dealers to consolidation and the need to get new products out to end users rapidly.

"Turfco has introduced 12 new products to the market just in the past seven years. Yet, the 'mainline' dealer operations focus most of their efforts on their primary product lines, so 'short line' and specialty products tend to get lost in the shuffle," says President George Kincaid.

Now, customers can get products, repair parts and answers much faster via tele-

phone or computer ([www.turfco.com](http://www.turfco.com)).

Mergers, especially among equipment manufacturers, forced Turfco to find an alternative to servicing customers.

So far, the direct purchase program has been running smoothly, says Kincaid.

"Things are going as planned and our ex-

pectations are being exceeded. We've already started selling products this winter when normally those sales didn't come around until spring. That shows that people are ready to buy and that the market is ready for this type of program."

-Jason Stahl

## Info Center

VIDEOS AND LITERATURE FOR THE GREEN INDUSTRY

THREE LEADING GUIDES . . . produced by the Professional Grounds Management Society can be purchased singly or together in a three-ring vinyl binder. Included in the package is the "Grounds Estimating Guide," "Grounds Maintenance Management Guidelines" and the "Grounds Management Forms and Job Descriptions Guide." Contact the PGMS at 410/584-9754 or log on to [www.PGMS.org](http://www.PGMS.org).

## The Eye of the Storm



At last, an economical controller series offering the same features as the most expensive units. The Storm Series controllers from Buckner by Storm are available in 6, 9 and 12-station indoor and outdoor models. For a complete list of features, contact your local Buckner by Storm distributor or visit our web site at [www.bucknerrirrigation.com](http://www.bucknerrirrigation.com).

- 4 Programs • 4 Start Times
- Y2K Compliant • Program Review
- Day-Off Feature
- Audible Fault Alarm
- Monthly % Adjustment
- 0 - 300% Water Adjustment
- 3 Year Warranty

Buckner by Storm 4381 N. Brawley Ave., Fresno, CA 93722 (800) 328-4469 fax (800) 997-0500



## Ferris acquired by Simplicity

**PORT WASHINGTON, WI** — In a move designed to take advantage of each company's unique market niche, Simplicity Manufacturing Inc. purchased Ferris Industries, Munnsville, NY, in early December. Simplicity's operations in the consumer mowing sector can now expand into the commercial side with Ferris' products.

According to David Ferris, chairman of Ferris, the company's new riding mowers with independent suspension have spurred demand and requirements for stepped-up production capacity that were problematic for the 120-employee firm. "These opportunities led to our decision to partner with a firm such as Simplicity that could provide the capital and management necessary to accelerate the product development and manufacturing modernization programs planned for the near future," he said.

Jim Wier, Simplicity's president, noted the acquisition will expand the product offering for Simplicity's network of dealers throughout the United States. He said Simplicity will continue to market commercial mowers under the Ferris name. For more information, visit [www.simplicitymfg.com](http://www.simplicitymfg.com).



**[CLIPPINGS]**

### Requesting quiet

**BETHESDA, MD** — Directors of the Portable Power Equipment Manufacturers Association passed a resolution asking all leaf blower manufacturers to label blowers with their sound levels. The resolution says that noise will be measured by the revised ANSI B 175.2 standard which, it's hoped, removes some of the variables that hampered previous labeling initiatives.

### Zeneca out-sources research

**WILMINGTON, DE** — Cambridge Discovery Chemistry, formerly a wholly owned subsidiary of Oxford Molecular Group and Zeneca Agrochemicals, will take over responsibility for Zeneca's chemistry research facility at its R&D Center in Richmond, CA.

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# Hot new products for 2000

**Looking for new products or ideas to save time, labor and add services? These are sure to have an impact on how you run your operations**

BY LM'S STAFF

## **Track with heart**

The Hinowa TrackMaster won't take the place of a skid steer loader in big jobs, but it can save lots of labor in many landscaping tasks, especially those with a tight fit.



This imported unit has a retractable track system that reduces its width down to only 30 in., small enough to fit through gates. Less weight and minimum ground pressure dispersed evenly over the track system means the unit is less likely to damage lawns or other prepared surfaces.

Attachments include a self-loading dumper bed, spray kit, mini-excavator kit, cement mixer and leveling blade.

Mertz Inc., Ponca City, OK, is distributor. Call 800/654-6433 or visit the Web at [www.mertzok.com/](http://www.mertzok.com/) Circle no. 228

## **Franchised irrigation**

Michigan-based Spartan Irrigation Inc. offers a program to help landscape contractors add irrigation to their service menus. The target market is residential and light commercial turf irrigation.

"We envision green industry service providers adding irrigation services as a value-added service, and thereby strengthening their existing customer relationships. We further envision a franchised opportunity as being the best vehicle to accomplish this goal," said the company.

Call Spartan Irrigation at 800/331-1746 or E-mail: [info@spartanirrigation.com/](mailto:info@spartanirrigation.com/) Circle no. 229

### Bobcatting in style

My oh my, how today's Bobcat Loaders differ from the first units 40 years ago — full-suspension seats, heating/ventilation systems, dome lights, an electrical outlet for cell phones or other accessories. Operator comfort and safety is featured in the new Bobcat G series loaders. Check out



the deluxe instrument panel on the G-series loaders.

For more information, call 701/241-8740; E-mail: [infocenter@bobcat.com](mailto:infocenter@bobcat.com); see the Web site [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com)/ Circle no. 230

### Eye of the storm

Buckner's new Storm Series Controllers are packed with the power and flexibility of high-end commercial controllers. The display screen is large for easy reading. There is both dial and button programming, and a detachable slideout facepack has a nonvolatile memory. The controllers are available in 6-, 9- and 12-station indoor and outdoor models with four programs, four start times, day-off feature, audible fault alarm, monthly percent adjustment and program review to 300% water adjustment. Contact Buckner by Storm at 800/328-4469/ Circle no. 231

### Easy to learn Dingo tracker

The new Dingo TX compact utility loader from Toro measures only 34.5 in. wide and is able to fit through 36-in. gates where



only human laborers could go before. One hand controls the traction drive while the other controls bucket and loader functions. The walk-behind unit offers a wide choice of attachments. Toro's new dedicated track drive gives it power and low ground pressure, allowing for minimal turf damage.

For more information contact Toro at 800-476-9673; [www.toro.com](http://www.toro.com)/ Circle no. 232

### Light as a feather trimmer

RedMax's new professional string trimmer features a stronger, lightweight composite tube. It also meets California CARB II and EPA standards for 2000 with RedMax's Strato Charged Air Head engine. The new 25.4-cc, two-cycle engine weighs less and is 30% more fuel efficient, RedMax says. An ergonomically designed loop handle is positioned on the shaft for optimum balance and reduced operator fatigue.

Call RedMax at 800/291-8251, ext. 29/ Circle no. 233

### Goodbye, geese

Flight Control™ promises to solve geese problems around office and commercial complexes, athletic fields, recreational facilities, residential areas, parks and golf courses. Distributed by Lesco, it works in two ways: it gives a visual warning since geese see the compound in the ultraviolet light spectrum, and it also gives an anti-feedant warning since geese have a strong gut reaction if they eat treated turf. Flight Control says it is naturally occurring and is not harmful to plants, mam-

mals or birds when used properly. It mixes with water. Apply with standard spray equipment.

Contact Lesco at 800/321-5325/ Circle no. 234

### For happier soils

Niftier than French toast on a stick, Planet Green's concentrated pelletized compost improves the health of soils by increasing their organic content and raising the activity of beneficial microbes. The dried product is lightweight and is easy to apply with a conventional drop or broadcast spreader. The pelletized product, made from mushroom waste, provides a consistent 2-3-3 analysis with 6% calcium and 1% iron.

The pellets are available in 33-lb., 50-lb. and 1,000-lb. bulk sacks from West Grove, PA. Call 888/425-2827 or see the Web site [www.planetgreen.com](http://www.planetgreen.com)/ Circle no. 235

### Easy home fertigation

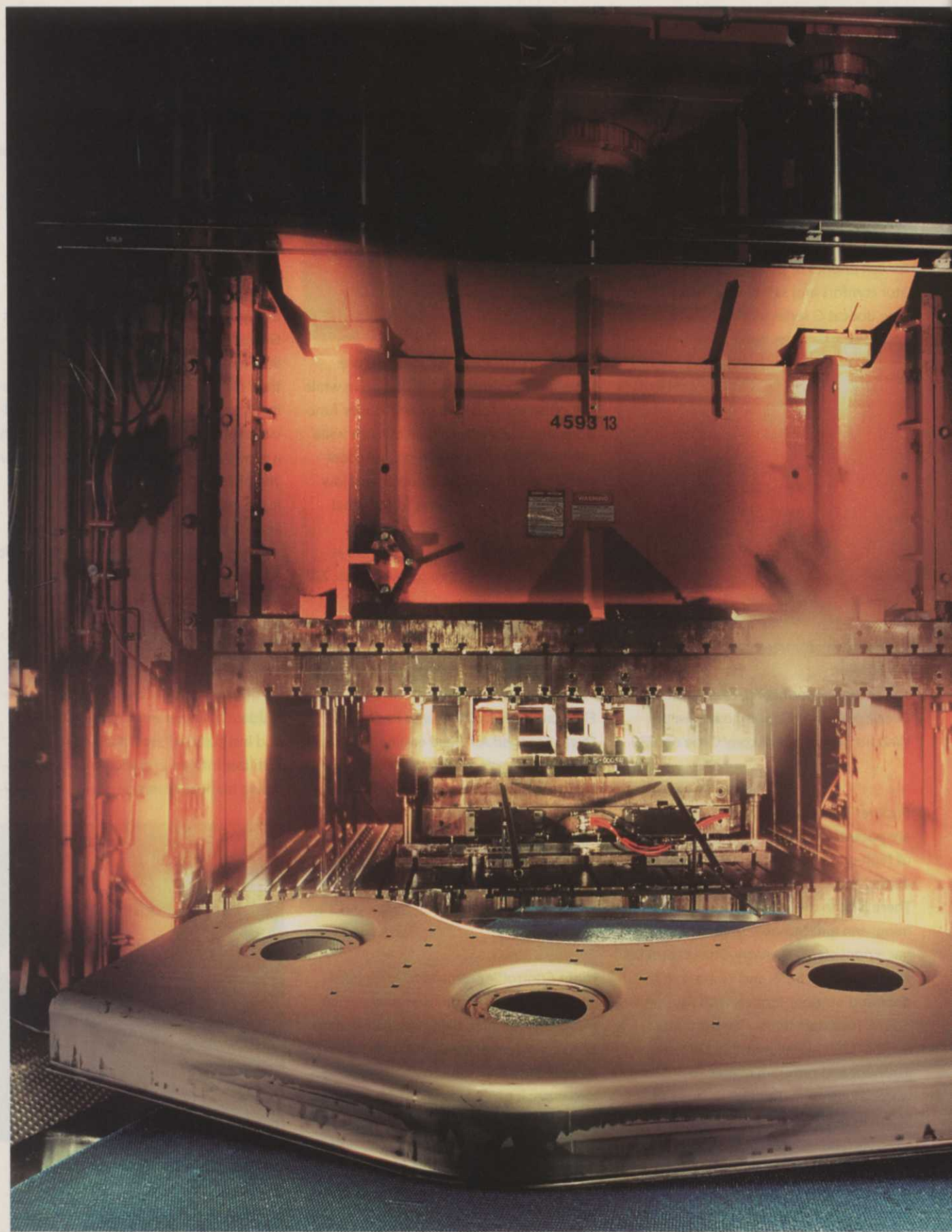
FertiGator's fertigation system is ideal for residential lawns and small commercial and institutional sites. It injects a liquid fertilizer into an irrigation mainline, providing blanket coverage of nutrient-bearing



ing water over all the areas reached by sprinklers.

Ned Lips, CEO of FertiGator Inc., says

*continued on page 30*





**7IRON** Its inspiration was the passion to build the best. Four years and four million pounds of pressure later, it's finally ready. Introducing the 7-Iron™ mower deck from John Deere. Stamped from a single sheet of incredibly thick 7-gauge (.177 inch) steel, in the industry's largest press, its perfectly smooth and impossibly strong shell (shown to the left) has no welds to break, or irregular



areas to catch clippings. A full-length front baffle **A** eliminates any dead space and brushes grass into an ideal vertical position. An almost unimaginable depth (5.75 inches at maximum **B**) creates a superior vacuum in which to cut. A multi-step electrostatic paint

## A diamond isn't the only thing formed by tons of pressure.

process (impressive for the automotive industry, let alone mowing) guards against rust. While features such as a rubber deflector shield and aluminum spindle hubs further prove its engineering excellence. (Rubber is more flexible than steel, and aluminum die casting more precise.) Available in 48-, 54-, and 60-inch widths, and only from your local John Deere dealer, the 7-Iron deck is simply the best



in the world. To see for yourself, call 1-800-537-8233 or visit [www.deere.com](http://www.deere.com) for a dealer near you.

Circle No. 115 on Reader Inquiry Card

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# hot new products

continued from page 27

his system is the first residential application of this technology that allows true metering of fertilizer by zone. "This is a significant breakthrough in lawn treatment, since different areas of the yard often require different levels of fertilizer," he said. The 1-lb. unit itself is small — only 7 in. long.

Contact Fertigator at 314/821-5858; Web site: [www.fertigator.com/](http://www.fertigator.com/) Circle no. 236

## Hauls lots of stuff

Save your back, or your crew's backs. If you regularly move a lot of landscape material, check out the Haulzall. Weighing 450 lbs., this brute can carry 800 lbs. of material up a 20° incline. A choice of



Honda's 5- or 5.5-hp engines move the unit at a comfortable walking speed. A 360° rear swivel wheel gives the Haulzall more maneuverability. Attachments include a flat bed, dolly, trailer hitch, snow blade and hydraulic lift-dump cylinder.

The Foster Mfg. Corp., Racine, WI, can give you more details at 414/633-7073/ Circle no. 237

## The world isn't flat

If every property you mowed was flat, you wouldn't need the DewEze All Terrain Mower 725. While this rear-discharge rotary rider does just fine on flat areas, the two halves of the 72-in. deck float independently to handle uneven terrain. Hy-

draulics control the leveling, steering, blade drives and wheel motors, eliminating the need for belts. Automatic self leveling keeps the operator, the 25hp Kohler engine and controls vertical up to 30°.

Contact DewEze Manufacturing, Harper, KS, 316/896-7381; Web address: [www.deweze.com/](http://www.deweze.com/) Circle no. 238

## Get a grip

Ski Landscape says that "The Pincher" can load and unload trees with safety and precision in half the time it takes forks or buckets to do the same job. It transports



one to three trees to predug holes and releases, regrips, sets and holds the trees as one groundsman backfills to stabilize. Release to open the paddles, skid back and forth to backfill the hole, finish by hand and proceed to the next tree. "The Pincher" features same side load and unload from trucks and flatbeds. A hydraulic hose is included, but hydraulic quick couplers are not.

Call Ski Landscape at 317/897-5885/ Circle no. 239

## High-horsepower tractors

Tractors in Kubota's new B-Series line feature hydraulic and transmission systems redesigned for better performance and increased durability. Features on the Standard B7400 and B7500 include four-wheel drive, full-open hood and liquid-cooled E-TVCS diesel engines. Kubota says that the Premier B2710 and B2910



models now have the highest rated horsepower numbers in their class. The full-open hood, along with a double-element air cleaner, are designed for trouble-free operation and minimal maintenance.

Contact Kubota at 888/4KUBOTA, ext. 900.; [www.kubota.com/](http://www.kubota.com/) Circle no. 240

## Liquid-cooled mower engine

The new vertical-shaft, twin-cylinder Kohler Aegis engines combine a liquid-



cooling design, heavy-duty air filtration system and other features of the air-cooled Command series. Kohler says that its Aegis engines have greater displacements than competitive liquid-cooled models at each horsepower. The engines will be available at 17hp, 20hp and 23hp.

For more information contact Kohler at 920/457-4441; [www.kohlerco.com/](http://www.kohlerco.com/) Circle no. 241

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