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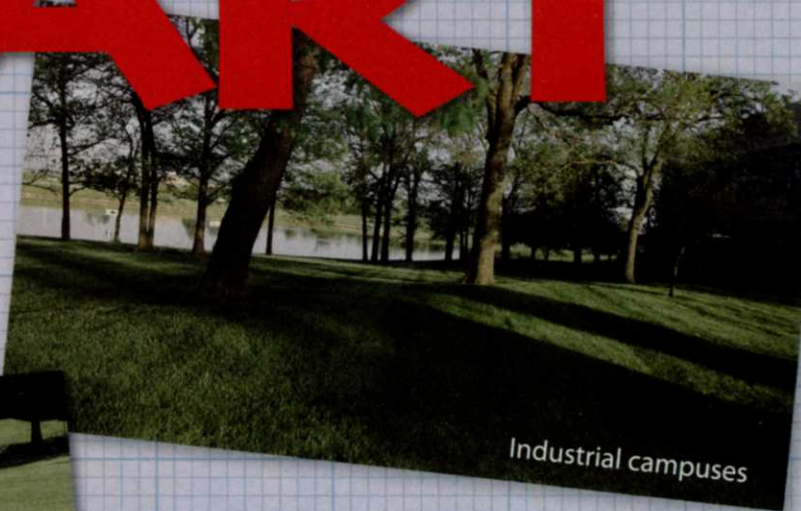
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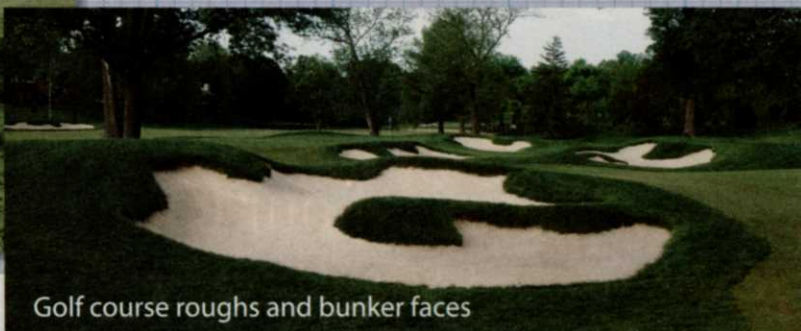
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PROVEN SOLUTIONS

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ON THE COVER

Beautiful landscapes of the future will be designed with sustainability in mind. Photo courtesy: The Hendrikus Group

DISEASE CONTROL FOR COOL SEASON LAWNS

DATE: Thursday, May 28, 2009
TIME: Noon EDT

Matt Giese, technical manager at Syngenta, will discuss cool season turf diseases and how diagnosing them can increase revenue. To register visit www.landscapemanagement.net/webinar



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LMdirect!

Channel your inner Spielberg. Learn about Rain Bird's Intelligent Use of Water film competition.

Athletic Turf News

Turfgrass, it seems, is becoming the whipping boy of American landscapes by a small but growing group of critics.

LD/B Solutions

USDA Secretary Vilsack and First Lady Michelle Obama support community gardens.

Get Growing

The Missouri Botanical Garden identifies 13 new "Plants of Merit" for the Midwest in 2009.

Correction: A comment on Agrium's new XCU slow-release fertilizer in the "Fertilizer Trends" article in the February edition of *Landscape Management* should have been attributed to Bryan Gooch, marketing manager with Agrium Advanced Technologies. The quote was incorrectly attributed to Don Myers, product development manager for herbicides and plant growth regulators (PGRs) with Bayer Environmental Science.

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LM MARKET MATCH We've made your life a little easier by supplying icons that direct you to stories targeting your core business.

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Landscape Management

OUR MISSION: *Landscape Management*—the leading information resource for large, successful lawn care, landscape maintenance, design/build and irrigation professionals—empowers Green Industry professionals to learn and grow from their peers and our exclusive business intelligence. Serving as the industry conscience, we not only report on but also help shape news, views, trends and solutions.



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THE HALLMARK

RON HALL EDITOR-AT-LARGE

Contact Ron via e-mail at rhall@questex.com.

Without healthy soils, we're history

Only water approaches soil's importance in sustaining life on our beautiful blue globe. As obvious as that might seem, seldom do we give soil the attention it warrants in light of its crucial role in our livelihoods — not to mention our existence.

Perhaps like you, I've unthinkingly looked at soil and dirt as being one and the same. There's a vast and vital difference, of course.

Living soil — replete with minerals, organic matter, invertebrates, macro-flora and micro-flora — is the foundation we build upon to populate our urban environments with beautiful, life-enhancing green material. Healthy soil is a marvelously complex and synergistic mixture of living and non-living material that engenders plant health.

Dirt, which is often lifeless, cannot do this.

Do we focus too narrowly on treating the symptoms of plant woes, rather than determining and fixing the root cause, which is usually damaged or poor-quality soil? Perhaps. Sometimes, of course, we have no choice, inheriting pre-existing conditions in the form of lifeless dirt. Then we must choose

between improving the soil's capacity to sustain healthy plant life or launching a maintenance regimen that, in the long run, might turn out to be wasteful, expensive and potentially harmful to the environment. Economics and revenue considerations often loom large in determining which course is selected.

Why is soil top of mind for me now? An enlightening Earth Day presentation by Dr. Rattan Lal, a world-famous soil scientist, at

the Wooster, OH, campus of The Ohio State University re-opened my eyes to its vital importance — not just to our industry, but to our future well-being and survival.

I hope that you find Lal's 10 laws of soil, which he shared with an audience of several hundred Earth Day celebrants, as enlightening as I did:

- ▶ **Law #1:** The biophysical process of soil degradation is driven by economic, social and political forces.
- ▶ **Law #2:** When people are poverty-stricken, desperate and starving, they pass on their sufferings to the land.
- ▶ **Law #3:** It is not possible to take more out of a soil than what is put in it without degrading its quality.
- ▶ **Law #4:** Marginal soils cultivated with marginal inputs produce marginal yields and support marginal living.
- ▶ **Law #5:** Plants cannot differentiate among the nutrients supplied through inorganic fertilizers or organic amendments.
- ▶ **Law #6:** Mining carbon has the same effect on global warming, whether it is through mineralization of soil organic matter and extractive farming, burning fossil fuels or draining peat soils.
- ▶ **Law #7:** Even the elite varieties of plants cannot extract water and nutrients from any soil where they do not exist.
- ▶ **Law #8:** Soils are integral to any strategy of mitigating global warming and improving the environment.
- ▶ **Law #9:** Sustainable management of soils is the engine of economic development, political stability and transformation of rural communities in developing countries.
- ▶ **Law #10:** Sustainable management of soil implies the use of modern innovations built upon traditional knowledge. Those who refuse to use modern science to address urgent global issues must be prepared to endure more suffering.

If you would like to view Lal's complete PowerPoint presentation, which he kindly shared with me, email me at rhall@questex.com.



Dr. Rattan Lal

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COVER STORY

Our greener future

BY **RON HALL**
EDITOR AT LARGE

You can't put off getting in step with America's growing environmental movement if you want to ensure your place in tomorrow's Green Industry.

YOU MIGHT ALREADY have figured this out, but here's the scoop: Most of your customers aren't interested in green services, particularly if it means they will be writing bigger checks to you. The hype and posturing regarding sustainability, regardless of products or services, far exceed the public's acceptance and adoption.

At least that's the case right now.

"Very few people today are making buying decisions based on what is green," says Dr. Honey Rand, APR, president and CEO of Environmental PR Group, Lutz, FL. Rand describes selling propositions based solely on environmental claims as "meaningless."

"Green is the new branding. There is so much green now that (the term) has no meaning anymore," she adds.

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