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Selecting the right fertilizer to meet today's environmental and

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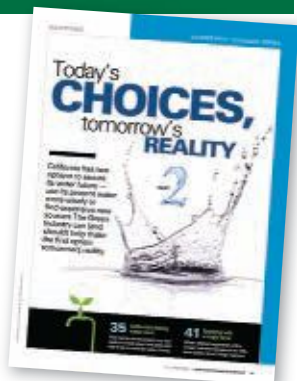
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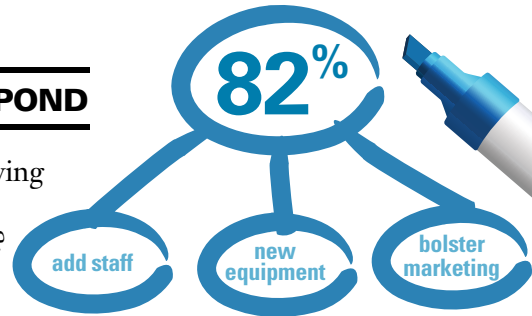
WATER WISE, PART 2

California's limited water options and learning to speak with a single voice.



READERS RESPOND

Which of the following best reflects your game plan for 2010?



9% Further cut staffing and other costs, as well as pricing.

9% Buy one or more other companies.

0% Sell the business.

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The word "green" is being used against us by environmental extremists. Truth be told, we are the original Green Industry. We must speak loudly and singularly to regain control of our destiny and the perceptions "green" conjures up in consumers' minds.

Athletic Turf News

Even with installs well north of 3,000 this past decade, the total number of synthetic turf fields remains tiny compared to the number of natural grass fields.

LD/B Solutions

Fire destroys hundreds of homes each year, often burning thousands of acres of land. The California Landscape Contractors Association offers tips to help you recover clients' landscapes.

Get Growing

The Dutch know how to launch a new flower. Princess Maxima of the Netherlands, wife of Willem-Alexander, Crown Prince of Orange, baptized Holland's newest tulip recently at a ceremony in Manhattan's Battery Park.

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Sustainability's truest meaning

What does sustainability mean for us? Perhaps you're wondering that in light of the growing popularity, use and misuse of the word within our society and within our industry.

We can start with the obvious, of course. We can tick off a list of environmentally friendly landscape practices — providing our customers' properties with the right plants in the right places, irrigating efficiently, not bagging grass clipping and so forth. That's just part of being sustainable. Its meaning also includes the survival, health and growth of our companies, and ultimately our industry.

Sustainability means combining environmental with business best practices, the two being different sides of the same coin. Let's not confine our understanding of the term sustainability exclusively to what's "green."

Here are some time-tested strategies for building sustainability into our companies. Think expansively.

▶ Have a kickoff meeting with those you're counting on to help define your company's new sustainable initiatives. You need a clear understanding of what they mean to you before you begin your journey. In addition to focusing on environmental services you might build into your company or add as services, consider programs to increase the well-being and skills of your team. This will increase the value of your company and its services.

▶ The owner and key managers must embrace sustainable goals as a genuine business opportunities

rather than as a public relations. Employees (and customers) will not buy into any program that they perceive to be insincere or half-hearted.

▶ Set realistic goals. Incorporate one new green or sustainable component into your company at a time. Start with the easiest changes that will deliver the most immediate results. Rather than installing solar panels, which may have a long or uncertain return on investment (ROI), start by replacing energy-leaking windows and doors. Rather than switching your fleet to biofuels, in light of their fluctuating price, consider a fleet "no-idling" rule, explaining to your employees what it means in terms of fuel cost savings. On the people side, strengthen your company's employee training or institute wellness or smoking cessation programs.

▶ Find champions to lead, monitor and measure your company's efforts. Align these new duties with their business and compensation objectives.

▶ Share what's working and what's not working with your team — why your first initiatives should return quick, measurable wins. Sharing the results of these first successes will build support and enthusiasm within your company to meet bigger future goals.

▶ Fold each new innovation as seamlessly as you can into your company's operations. Every change should offer business, environmental or customer benefits, and not just "feel-good" benefits. Each effort should offer returns comparable to those achievable through other business-critical enterprises if you want it to provide a positive effect on your operation.

It might seem that I've given short shrift to environmental considerations, or what most of us would consider the "green" aspects of sustainability. But if you run a truly professional Green Industry service shop you should already be using horticultural best practices; you're already preserving and enhancing your clients' outdoor environments.

That's what being a true pro in this industry means, after all.

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Moving forward

RISE President Allen James announces his pending retirement and unveils the organization's 'Debugging the myth' Web site.

BY MARTY WHITFORD EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

“**H**igh hopes and low overhead” was the mantra at RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) when the organization was founded in 1991. Manning the helm for RISE since then, Allen James recalls navigating choppy regulatory waters that year with no staff, 12 RISE members and an annual budget of about \$40,000.

What a difference 18 years makes. Since then, environmental extremists and local, state and federal governments and agencies have turned up the heat on RISE members — pesticide, herbicide, fungicide and fertilizer manufacturers, formulators and distributors behind the technologies that protect our plants and public health. But at least today, thanks partly to James' helmsmanship, RISE has five full-time staffers,

an annual budget of nearly \$3 million and more than 200 members that account for more than 90% of the nation's specialty pesticide production.

At RISE's Sept. 27-30 annual meeting, held jointly in Orlando, FL, with CropLife America, an emotional James announced he will step down in August 2010, and move back to his home state, North Carolina, with his wife Ann. James noted he and his good friends at RISE are far from done. They've increased annual contributions by nearly \$1 million since 2008 (almost 50%), helping fund a new “Debugging the myth” RISE Web site and an integrated, comprehensive digital advocacy campaign.

James, RISE's first (and only, to date) executive director, has served as president of the organization and vice president of CropLife America since 2000. A search committee consisting of members of the RISE Governing Board will begin the task of finding James' successor in late 2009.

Before ending his last RISE President's Address, James thanked the room full of industry leaders for their continued support, and said he was honored to collaborate with such innovators who typically invest \$256 million to develop and launch a single successful active ingredient.

“Together, we will reframe the debate,” James proclaimed. “We will reclaim the high-ground. We know there is a majority of people who understand how and why technology advances. When explained, they can understand the value of pest management and plant health technology, just as they understand other cutting-edge industrial technology advancements.”

To assure forward movement, RISE has

E. ALLEN JAMES AWARD

RISE has created an E. Allen James Award, which will be given annually, beginning in 2010, to honor an individual who makes outstanding contributions to the specialty pesticide and fertilizer industry, epitomizing the essence of RISE's first president.

“This award is a lasting tribute to Allen James and will be given for years to come to recognize others who build upon his legacy,” said Josh Weeks, outgoing chairman of RISE's Governing Board and Bayer Environmental Science's vice president of professional products, North America.

The relationship between agriculture and specialty would not be as strong and as productive as it is if James had not been chosen to lead RISE, said Jay Vroom, CropLife America president and CEO. “The extraordinary value this relationship brings to our advocacy, regulatory and communications endeavors cannot be overstated,” Vroom added.

Dan Rosenbaum, incoming chair of the RISE Governing Board and director of FMC Corp.'s specialty products business concurred: “Allen has been constant in his service and vision, and has made great strides in providing a strong, unified voice for the specialty pesticide industry.” — MW

bolstered its grassroots advocates to more than 1,000 members from just 400 three years ago, and its new consumer-facing Web site will be coupled with proactive blogging, engaging advocates in online pesticide, herbicide, fungicide and fertilizer discussions.

“Finally, to assure industry and association progress, our board will hire a great new President with creative and progressive ideas and leadership,” James said. “This industry will move from the shadow of the past and current challenges ... to the bright light of the future.”



RISE President Allen James will step down in August 2010.