

Calendar of Events 2001

March 8

Western Regional Conference, Radisson Inn, Buffalo, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web site: <http://www.nysta.org>.

July 20-22

Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's (OPEI) 18th annual International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo (EXPO 2001), Kentucky Exposition Center, Louisville, KY. Contact: Sellers Expositions, 550 S. 4th Ave., Louisville, KY 40202-2504; (800) 558-8767 or (502) 562-1962; fax (502) 562-1970. Web site: <http://expo.mow.org>.

November 10-13

12th annual Green Industry Expo (GIE), Tampa, FL. Contact: Professional Lawn Care Association of America, 1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-135, Marietta, GA 30068-2112; (770) 973-2019; fax (770) 578-6071; info@gieonline.com. Web site: <http://www.gieonline.com>.

November 13-15

Turf and Grounds Exposition, Oncenter, Syracuse, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web site: <http://www.nysta.org>.

sportsTURF *The Front Office*



Green is gold in Illinois

So just how big is this green industry that we are involved in? The numbers have been fuzzy and hard to define, but a recent study in my home state of Illinois has added some clarity to matter, and the numbers are staggering.

"Preliminary estimates show that, in 1999, the product and service sectors of Illinois' green industry generated nearly \$2.9 billion in sales," said Gary Rolfe, professor and head of the University of Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences.

These sales figures place the green industry ahead of the more traditional agricultural commodities in economic importance to the state economy. In comparison, total cash receipts from corn stand at \$2.56 million, soybeans at \$2.1 million, hogs and pigs at \$646,000 and cattle at \$490,000.

"I was surprised by the numbers," said Greg Oltman, GRO Horticultural Enterprises, Inc., of Union, Ill. "In many ways we are an agricultural industry and the numbers show that we stack up very well with more traditional agriculture sectors."

Rolfe sees the survey as a rallying point for the industry's many small associations. "I don't think anyone had a clue that the green industry was as large as it turned out to be. It's a very important piece of information that could help influence legislative initiatives and bring more research dollars to this important sector," he said.

The survey identified more than 9,000 green industry businesses in Illinois and more than 2.3 million end-users of green industry products and services. It estimates that the green industry product and service sectors employ nearly 74,000 workers with an annual payroll of more than \$1 billion. Overall, the green industry employs a workforce of nearly 160,000 people with a payroll more than \$1.74 billion.

The fair market value of all assets directly associated with producing, selling or maintaining green areas and plants in Illinois is more than \$8 billion.

According to Rolfe, the employment and income multipliers associated with the green industry are 1.52 and 2.70, respectively. This means that for every job created within the green industry, an additional 0.52 jobs are created within the overall state economy, and for every dollar paid in green industry wages and salaries, an additional \$1.70 in wages and salaries are paid within the overall state economy.

The overall combined value of green industry product sales, service receipts and end-user payrolls amounts to more than \$3.9 billion.

More than 12,000 survey questionnaires were mailed, producing an overall response rate of 31 percent. The University of Illinois study was funded, in part, by a coalition of green-industry professional associations.

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