

Show Off Your Most Intriguing Job



Sod Solutions is on the lookout for interesting, high quality projects to feature in upcoming marketing materials. If you, or any of your customers, have been involved in a project

such as this and would like to tell others about it, please contact Brenda or Greg (843.849.1288) with the details. If possible, we would love to have great pictures to accompany the story. Thanks.



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Tobey Talk - From Page 2

For all varieties, now is a good time to perform soil samples in several areas of your fields to prepare for spring. Add lime to increase pH where needed. Remember, it takes several months for most forms of lime to fully take effect. It is essential to prepare fields now for successful spring planting and growth.

Each winter, Sod Solutions collects additional data on the cold weather performance of our varieties. This process will continue indefinitely as we work to develop "real world" answers to issues affecting production.

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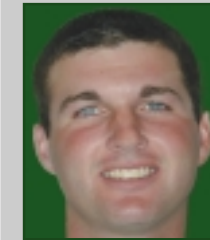
At Right
Joel Lane, Sod Solutions Field Representative, discusses his thoughts after a recent tour of many licensed producers in the southeast.

Celebration Bermudagrass Ready Licensing Begins in November



View From The Road

By Joel Lane - Field Representative



In recent travels, I've visited producers in Florida, Georgia, and Alabama to get a feel for what issues are on their minds.

To my delight, I received a great deal of positive feedback concerning the quality and marketability of our turfgrasses. After speaking with many of you, I feel confident that our turfgrass varieties are superior products that appeal to many customers and will continue to do so in the years to come.

The production strategies utilized by our producers have been a tremendous help in spurring interest and sales in our turfgrasses (including the newer selections). It is obvious that many of you feel confident with these grasses in a long-term sense and are increasing acreage in order to meet the demands of your customers.

For all the positive news, there are still challenges that must be addressed, including the uncertain economy and the fallout from the events of September 11. I have no doubt, however, that working together, we will successfully meet these challenges head on.

I have enjoyed meeting all of you and plan to keep in close contact with our licensed producers in the southeast. Thank you for your most recent hospitality and please feel free to contact me if I can assist you in any way. Phone: 904.631.4343

Sod Solutions is pleased to announce the release of Celebration Bermudagrass, the first commercially available hybrid Bermuda variety that provides a degree of shade tolerance while exhibiting beautiful dark blue-green color and a low growth habit. Celebration **technical information and licensing materials will be mailed** to all current licensed producers during November in anticipation of an initial planting stock release during spring 2002. **Initial planting stock is limited** and Sod Solutions encourages all interested producers to review the mailing carefully to ensure their participation in this exciting new program.

Bermudagrasses have been stigmatized by high maintenance requirements, but Celebration is destined to change that with its drastically reduced mowing requirements due in large part to its prostrate growth. Celebration is a tough, hard wearing, drought tolerant grass that has a **wide range of applications**, including use in moderately shaded areas such as high filtered light situations in home lawns. Celebration will be equally valuable in golf and sports applications that require some shade tolerance.

Sod Solutions is excited about Celebration, the latest in our growing line of improved warm season turfgrasses. As always, we encourage your thoughts concerning this new release.



Find Answers To Frequently Asked
Questions About Our Varieties
On Our Redesigned Web Site
www.sodsolutions.com

With Winter On Its Way, Are Your Turfgrasses Ready?

Winterizing Tips for Palmetto, EMPIRE, and EMPRESS

It is hard to believe that winter is just around the corner. At this time of year, I thought it would be beneficial to provide a few production tips for the approaching cooler weather.

Palmetto St. Augustine:

Shorten mowing heights. During the summer, lawns and fields are mowed taller to conserve moisture and allow for increased surface area on leaf tissue for stronger growth and root development. In winter, moisture content is easier to contain and **turf will generally perform better when mowed shorter.** For Palmetto, 1" is a good winter mowing height. Do not scalp. If the grass is more than 2" tall now, gradually lower the height over a several week period to reduce damage.

Fertilize with **less nitrogen and more iron using balanced fertilizers.** It is risky to fertilize within one month of your region's average first frost date with a high Nitrogen fertilizer. Iron and several minor elements usually contained in iron supplements will improve color, increase cold resistance, and extend color through light frosts. Iron and iron based products can be applied up to the first frost.

EMPIRE and EMPRESS Zoysia:

Again, shorten mowing heights. EMPIRE is a very cold hardy grass and will perform better when mowed to ¾" to 1" in the winter season. The goal is to extend the growing season to the maximum and **"set" the grass up to fire out of dormancy** in the spring. Even if EMPIRE is scalped, it regrows rapidly from rhizomes.

EMPRESS Zoysia needs to be maintained at a height of ½" to 1" going into the winter. **If the height is taller than 1", slow green-up will occur in the spring,** as is the case with most fine bladed Zoysias due to the physical properties of the grasses.

Many producers have been "pushing" production of EMPIRE and EMPRESS with very high rates of Nitrogen. Yes, it is true these improved grasses can handle more fertilizer and grow faster when they are applied in the active growing season.

STOP!

Now is the time for balanced fertilizers designed for your soil type. Again, iron and iron based products increase plants resistance to cold damage.

See **Tobey Talk - Page 4**

Strategies For Marketing New Turfgrass Varieties

Growing one of our St. Augustine, Zoysia or Bermuda varieties often constitutes a producer's first experience with that grass type. Naturally, your customers are probably unfamiliar with the variety's characteristics and care as well. Understanding that, here are a few ideas to help you introduce a new variety to your customers.

- Determine how the grass fits into your farm's product line. No one grass can be everything to everyone.
- Educate yourself and your staff about the grass...what are its advantages and drawbacks. Familiarize yourself with the marketing tools developed and made available by Sod Solutions.
- Introduce the grass to your customers early in the production process. Use small amounts of your stock, or work through other licensees to broker jobs so that your customers can gain experience with the new variety on a small scale.
- As your stock moves closer to being ready for high volume sales, keep your customers informed about upcoming availability by holding a field day or other special promotion that highlights the new offering and your ability to supply their needs.
- Listen to your customers initial experiences and modify your approach continuously.



Tobey Wagner
President

Tobey Talk

Fifth Annual Producer's Meeting Scheduled For January 2002

To be Held During TPI Midwinter Conference in Orlando



Greg Douglas
Vice President

Market Rap

In a continuing effort to foster communication with our customers, Sod Solutions will hold its **Fifth Annual Producer's Meeting (APM) on January 30, 2001.** This year's APM will be held during the *Turfgrass Producers International* (TPI) Midwinter Conference. Both the APM and the TPI conference will be held at the Sheraton World Resort in Orlando, FL. Invitations and itineraries will be mailed out in December.

Although the two meetings are not being held in conjunction, it is our hope that participation in the APM will be enhanced by scheduling it along with, but not in conflict to, the TPI conference. Sod Solutions is aware that many of our licensees, like ourselves, are TPI members and **we hope this scheduling provides everyone an opportunity to attend both meetings while making only one trip.** For non-TPI members who have attended our APMs in years past, the meeting will be similar to those you've previously attended except that this year we will meet in the evening. Additionally, **for those who have never attended a TPI conference before, this presents a great opportunity to see what this outstanding organization is all about.**

The goal of this year's APM, as it has been in years past, is to present information we feel is important to all licensed producers. In addition to updates on the Palmetto St. Augustine, EMPIRE Zoysia, and EMPRESS Zoysia programs, a discussion period will be held that focuses on Celebration Bermudagrass...our newest release. The high-level marketing plans for 2002 will also be presented along with a look back at 2001's successes. **Most importantly, a dinner will be served to round out the evening.**

I would like to stress our strong desire that each licensee attend this year's APM

Marketing Highlights For 4th QTR 2001

October

- Multiple Rush Limbaugh Radio Ads (FL)
- 8 Ads in Turf Industry / Contractor Mags
- Tobey Visits Australia / Several Marketing Activities Planned
- 3 TV Programs on *The Designer's Landscape* With Gary Alan (US - Various PBS Outlets)

November

- Multiple Rush Limbaugh Radio Ads (FL)
- 9 Ads in Turf Industry / Contractor Mags
- 3 TV Programs on *The Designer's Landscape* With Gary Alan (US - Various PBS Outlets)
- Update EMPIRE Zoysia Sales Brochure

December

- Multiple Rush Limbaugh Radio Ads (FL)
- 9 Ads in Turf Industry / Contractor Mags
- 3 TV Programs on *The Designer's Landscape* With Gary Alan (US - Various PBS Outlets)

if possible. Personally, I can think of no better opportunity for you to see first hand what Sod Solutions is about, what projects we have underway, how we're working to make your business more successful, and how we appreciate you as a customer. So please, consider attending this year's **Annual Producer's Meeting...**we'd love to see you in Orlando.

Producer's Meeting Facts

- What:** 5th Annual Producer's Meeting
When: Wednesday, January 30
Where: Sheraton World Resort - Orlando, FL
Time: Approximate Times 6:30 - 9:00 PM
 Dinner Will Be Served
Who: All Licensed Producers Invited - A Maximum Number Of Invitations Per Licensee Will Be Designated In The December Mailout