

Sign Vandals Still at Large!!!



J.W. Turf in southeast FL was recently hit by vandals that defaced a sign at the entrance to the farm. Fortunately for JW, business wasn't negatively affected since only the logos of non-Sod Solutions varieties were erased.

The Palmetto St. Augustine, EMPIRE Zoysia, and EMPRESS Zoysia names and logos are registered trademarks of Sod Solutions, Inc. The Sod Solutions, Totality Shade Grass, and Celebration Bermudagrass names and logos are trademarks of Sod Solutions, Inc.

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APM, we've mailed a packet to you with the proceedings and information that was distributed. We hope you find this useful, but we acknowledge that it is nearly impossible to capture the exchange of ideas and information that occurs when you put 90 sod producers in the same room and close the doors.

The success of the meeting was due in large part to the help we received from folks like Will Nugent and Jonathan Brown from Bethel Farms, and Warren and Luly Prescott from J.W. Turf. Thanks to them and to all who attended. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

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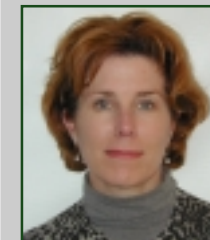
At Right
Sis Reda, Sod Solutions' Director of Marketing, introduces the new **Individualized Marketing Program 2002.**

New Strategic Ad Campaign Launched Emphasizes Quality, Brand Advantages



Individualized Marketing Will Be A Priority for 2002

By Sis Reda - Director of Marketing



Sod Solutions is "ramping up" marketing support offered to all licensed producers. In addition to the numerous

traditional brand-based marketing activities currently being conducted at the local, regional and national levels, we are initiating a program of direct, one-on-one marketing activities. These activities are aimed at providing personalized marketing-based support that you've told us you want.

The rationale for this program is to more directly assist you in meeting your business objectives, and to become more knowledgeable about your marketing priorities. A letter mailed to each producer the week of March 11 details the options available: **Product Education, Marketing Planning, Special Event Support, Joint Sales Calls, Sales Techniques, and Internet Marketing.** We encourage you to prioritize these six items, and return the selection form to us **no later than April 5.**

We will contact each responding licensee about their requested activities after April 5 to discuss how and when to best support you. While participation is voluntary, we hope you will consider how this additional support can benefit your business.

Sod Solutions has launched a new ad campaign with a distinctive theme for 2002. The campaign is built around the theme, "We go to the ends of the Earth", which reflects the enormous effort required to develop, release, produce and promote improved turfgrasses.

"We would not be the company we are without the superior production of the licensed producers," says Tobey Wagner. "This ad campaign communicates in a positive, memorable way that they, and Sod Solutions, invest significant energy, effort and money to bringing improved turfgrasses to market. It also reflects that Sod Solutions literally travels the globe and works with world renowned breeders in the course of our turfgrass development efforts."

"We go to the ends of the Earth" will appear in all 2002 print and broadcast ads, and will be incorporated into merchandising, display, Internet and print materials as they are updated. Sod Solutions has invested in custom photography and fresh ad layouts to enhance the ads' impact. These ads will be used to promote Sod Solutions' individual turfgrass brands and **can be customized** for use by individual licensees as needed. It is our belief that this sustained, cohesive, brand-based ad campaign will heighten visibility and demand in the marketplace, and the producers' ability to increase sales.

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Producers' Meeting '02

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Find Maintenance Suggestions For All Our Turfgrass Varieties On Our Redesigned Web Site www.sodsolutions.com

Sod Solutions Teams with Texas Producers on Celebration New Bermuda to be Released Through Turf Producer Co-op

Sod Solutions is pleased to announce an agreement with the **Turfgrass Producers of Texas (TPT)** to jointly release Celebration Bermudagrass in Texas. Celebration is a dark blue-green Bermuda that requires less mowing and has improved shade tolerance. Every member of TPT will have an equal opportunity to license Celebration during the first six months of release. Thereafter, a committee comprised of delegates from both TPT and Sod Solutions will make decisions regarding opportunities and fees for future licensing. License fees and royalties will be split between Sod Solutions and TPT. In consideration for this fee / royalty split, TPT will provide marketing and quality control assistance to Sod Solutions and the Celebration licensees. All Celebration will be certified by the Texas Blue Tag Certification system.

In addition to the joint release with TPT, Sod Solutions is presently negotiating similar agreements with the **Florida Sod Growers Co-op** and the **South Carolina Sod Producers Association**. Sod Solutions believes that sharing the decision making and financial benefits of proprietary turfgrass releases with these organizations will help foster improved communication between the member producers and will maximize the benefits of participation in the Celebration program for all licensees. These organizations have recognized the potential of Celebration as a unique tool for homes and sports fields. We appreciate their cooperation and look forward to a mutually beneficial program.

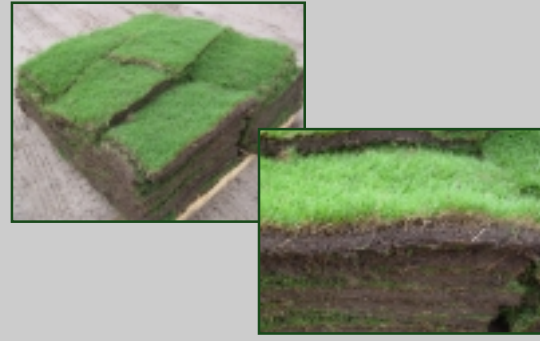
Sod Solutions also recognizes that co-op organizations and industry associations provide a forum for discussion and problem solving; an opportunity to share resources in marketing and promotion; and a chance for competitors to cooperate and strategically plan for the common

Celebration Bermudagrass Licensing Update

Here's an update on licensing activities for Celebration Bermudagrass, our latest release. Celebration is a very promising turfgrass, with marked advantages for residential, commercial and sports application.

- Licensing opportunities are now available.
- Based Upon Current Activity, we expect to license more than 30 producers in the southeast US during the next six months.
- Licenses will be offered for a limited time only.
- All licensees will be required to certify their Celebration through the appropriate state certification agency.

If you're interested in licensing Celebration Bermudagrass, don't delay, since licensing will only last for a limited time. For more information, please contact us at your earliest convenience.



At Left
Celebration Bermudagrass harvests easily and makes a beautiful pallet of sod.

good. These types of organizations are gaining importance in the turf industry as producers deal with common issues, including water and environmental issues, labor concerns, increased competition, and new restrictions on turf production imposed by legislators. We look forward to working with regional associations and co-ops, to more effectively and efficiently address the new challenges in our changing marketplace.



Tobey Wagner
President

Tobey Talk

Fifth Annual Producers' Meeting A "Super" Success A Super Bowl Celebration in Orlando Was Fun in the Sun

There are worse places to be in the dead of winter than Orlando, FL. Maybe that's why there was such a great turnout for the **Fifth Annual Producers' Meeting (APM)**. Over 100 licensed producers, guests and industry professionals attended the dinner meeting that was held at the Sheraton World Resort; also the site of the *Turfgrass Producers International (TPI)* Midwinter Conference which was being held the same week. We heard from many of you that the scheduling of the APM at the same location as TPI was beneficial logistically and allowed many non-TPI members to get a first hand look at what TPI has to offer.

The APM consisted of several presentations including: Palmetto, EMPIRE and EMPRESS program updates, an official introduction to Celebration Bermudagrass, a review of last year's marketing highlights and the unveiling of our new "We go to the ends of the Earth" campaign, a technical presentation concerning management of **summertime stress**, and a look at what's new in the turfgrass industry.

Additionally, several producers were honored for their tenure as Sod Solutions partners. Kirkland Sod, Elsberry Greenhouse, Murff Turf, SMR Turf, Floriturf Sod, Bethel Farms, Gary L. Resmondo Sod, A. Duda & Sons, Jones Turf, Anderson Turf, H&H Sod, R&G Sod, Nimmer Turf and R&R Turf have all been licensed for seven years. These producers formed the backbone of our company in the early years and we wouldn't be where we are today without their continuing commitment.

Since the APM was held the week before the Super Bowl, our theme this year was A Super Bowl Celebration. The door prizes had a **football flavor** and our giveaways included nerf style footballs. We also

Marketing Highlights For March - May 2002

March

- "We go the the ends of the Earth." Ad Campaign Rollout
- Multiple *Rush Limbaugh* Radio Ads (FL)
- 5 *Better Lawns and Gardens* Radio Ads (FL)
- *Better Lawns* Radio Interview (FL)
- 6 Ads in Turf Industry Publications
- Feature Article in *Turf South* Magazine
- Special Event Support - The Villages Water Issues Meeting and Presentation
- Palmetto Press Release for South Africa
- 2002 Producers Meeting Press Release
- Special Event Support - Florida Sod Growers Co-op Water Issues Meeting and Presentation
- Special Event Support - South Carolina Landscape Architectural Firm Product Introduction Meeting and Presentation

April

- Multiple *Rush Limbaugh* Radio Ads (FL)
- 4 *Better Lawns and Gardens* Radio Ads (FL)
- 5 Ads in Turf Industry Publications
- Feature Article in *Turf Central* Magazine
- Celebration Bermudagrass Sales Brochure Scheduled for Production
- Aulawn.com Web Site Developed and Launched

May

- Multiple *Rush Limbaugh* Radio Ads (FL)
- 4 *Better Lawns and Gardens* Radio Ads (FL)
- 7 Ads in Turf Industry Publications
- Celebration Bermudagrass Press Release
- Update of sodsolutions.com to Include Celebration Bermudagrass Information and Producer Search Functions

recognized the producers who had travelled the farthest to attend the meeting; Hantie and Faunus Cloete from Evergreen Gardens in South Africa and Kevin Ratliff from Gardner Turfgrass in Chandler, AZ.

For those unable to attend this year's **See Market Rap - Page 6**



Greg Douglas
Vice President

Market Rap