



Revolution Review

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THE \$10,000 BIG GREEN GIVEAWAY!

Turf Revolution has a long history of supporting the green industry. We have sponsored a variety of symposiums, awards and community projects. This year, however, we are going to support the green industry in North America in a really big way.

Turf Revolution's \$10,000 BIG GREEN GIVEAWAY is sure to create some excitement leading up to the February draw. We are giving away three prizes. First prize is \$5,000 in Turf Revolution granular organic product. Second prize is \$3,000 in Turf Revolution granular organic product and the third prize is \$2,000 in Turf Revolution granular organic product.

The draw is open to any green industry professional in North America from any segment of the industry. Municipalities, Institutions, Depots/Dealers, Landscape/Lawn Care/Property Maintenance Companies, Growers and Retailers are all welcome to enter the draw.

We will have ballot boxes at various shows and symposiums, including the GIE+ Expo show in Louisville, Kentucky; Expo FIHOQ in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec; the Toronto IPM Symposium; our two booths at the 2011 Congress Show in Toronto, Ontario; the 2011 CENTS Show in Columbus, Ohio; and the 2011 New England

Grows Show in Boston, Massachusetts.

It is our hope that this massive giveaway will generate a lot of excitement and give people another reason to visit some of the great shows mentioned above.

At a time when the green industry is facing some of the biggest challenges that it has ever seen, Turf Revolution knew that we, as a company, had to do something to help boost attendance at all of these great venues. These shows and symposiums offer everyone in our industry the chance to arm themselves with the tools and information that can help them succeed regardless of the economic climate or restrictive government legislation.

Together, we can help each other grow towards success in the green industry. **Turf Revolution's \$10,000 BIG GREEN GIVEAWAY** is one way to ensure a lot of healthy growth for the spring of 2011.

Can't wait to enter the contest? Ballots will be available at all of our show booths and we've even included one for you to fill out on the back of this newsletter.

38th ANNUAL CONGRESS CONFERENCE

Plan now to attend the Green Industry's largest event of the year

by Linda Nodello,
Landscape Ontario

The 38th edition of Congress — Canada's International Horticultural Trade Show and Conference — is here.

See over eight acres of leading suppliers' products and services to our industry all under one roof. Attend one or more of the highly informative educational sessions, many of which will focus on green initiatives.

Congress is actually four shows in one, including the Ontario Parks Association's Explorations trade show, Fencecraft produced by the Canadian Fence Industry Association, and the Green Forum sponsored by Communities in Bloom.

Over 500 exhibitors from eight countries will take part, many introducing new products for the first time in Canada. In addition, four of Ontario's leading horticultural colleges and one high school will showcase their talents by building feature gardens throughout the show.

Landscape Ontario's four-day symposium and conference program begins on Monday, January 10 with specialized seminars for specific industry sectors.

The concurrent conference, running January 11 – 13, features 32 sessions and is produced by partnering with numerous industry associations. Sessions feature dynamic industry speakers sharing expertise and insights in all areas of business success. Jeff Scott and Charles Vander Kooi are back by popular demand. A new panel format featuring successful Landscape Ontario entrepreneurs, chaired by Michael Van Dongen, promises to be a program highlight.

The Natural Marketing Institute (NMI), a leading business consulting and market research firm, recently reported that Canadians are the most willing to pay for



"green" products. One quarter of them will spend more for a green product. Compare that to only 15% of U.S. consumers who are willing to pay more.

At Congress Conference, delegates will be introduced to some of the hottest trends in the industry at a seminar covering the basics of green roofs, green walls, and rain gardens.

Numerous sessions will focus on sustainable business practices and issues such as customer willingness to pay more for plants and/or gardens that are free of chemicals. Urban forest sustainability will consider the vegetation resource, the community framework, and management approaches to sustainably managing urban forest resources.

Climate change, water restrictions, and sustainable gardening are increasingly important issues for the public. What are we doing as horticulture professionals to ensure that we do all that can be done to be "Green for Life"?

The Ontario Parks Association, Communities in Bloom, and Landscape Ontario have come together for the third time to celebrate our treasured parks and green spaces, and promote the enjoyment and healthy lifestyle benefits open spaces provide to Canadians.

These groups have over 150 years of collective green space and community leadership behind them. By combining their mandates, Ontario Parks Association's "Protecting Tomorrow Today"; Communities in Bloom's "People, Plants and Pride"; and Landscape Ontario's "Green for Life," they can directly influence our sector's future, and enhance lives for those of all ages and abilities.

The event's goal is to bring together over 200 municipal leaders, parks staff and community stakeholders to develop strategies encouraging people of all ages and abilities to enjoy gardening, recreational parks, parklands and landscapes.

Congress is proud to have been the first Zero Waste trade show ever held at the Toronto Congress Centre in 2009. Since that time we have saved 179 trees and 697 cubic yards of landfill space.



Collectively we are moving toward sustainable practices both at home and in our work. The goal of green industry professionals is to learn how to run their business sustainably and make a profit.

For more information, or to register for the trade show and/or conference, please go to www.locongress.com.

DEPOT SPOTLIGHT:

Huron Bay Co-operative

by Don Powers

It is always a pleasure meeting with Roy Botma, Manager for Huron Bay Co-operative Inc. in Owen Sound, Ontario. Huron Bay Co-op is a depot for Turf Revolution's commercial products and also sells the retail line to the homeowner.

Roy has 35 years of experience serving the community in agricultural, lawn and garden sales. He specializes in fertilizers, as well as animal and crop nutrition. With this amount of knowledge and experience, he is confident in promoting and selling Turf Revolution products to his valued customers.

Huron Bay Co-op has nine locations in western Ontario. Their retail business specializes in animal and pet food, crop products and farm supplies. Many of these locations also offer a selection of Turf Revolution's retail and commercial products. The Owen Sound outlet, in particular, offers the complete line of Turf Revolution products.

Roy believes that the success behind Huron Bay Co-op is their customer service, knowledgeable staff and innovative products. "We have been selling Turf

Revolution products for four years and have seen a steady increase in sales in the commercial and retail lines. I like the fact that Turf Revolution uses only the highest quality ingredients to produce well balanced and effective products," comments Roy.



Roy feels that one of the tools that help to sell Turf Revolution products is the Soil Test Kit. It is inexpensive, accurate and easy to interpret. He knows that soil testing has always been an important part of agriculture and now the homeowner and lawn care industry have the advantage of using the same tool. Soil testing promotes professionalism, helps to meet the needs of the plants, corrects any soil deficiencies

and minimizes unnecessary expense. It just makes good agronomic sense because everything starts with the soil.

Roy's belief is that "science and a quality fertilizer are a good start to selling, but personal contact is the key to a sale. Always strive to establish personal relationships.

My customers are personally contacted by phone and this is always followed by a personal visit." Roy's customers are always shown samples and often are given on-site demonstrations. Roy believes that a hands-on approach is important.

"As we move into a new season, I am always anticipating the new and innovative products Turf Revolution will be introducing. Their new

retail product **Roots 'N Blooms** and the new **SSN** — soluble stabilized nitrogen fertilizer — will definitely add to my sales."

Roy ended our conversation by saying, "I must complement the office staff at Turf Revolution. They are polite, courteous and knowledgeable. It is a pleasure dealing with Turf Revolution and I consider them to be a leader in our industry."

For a complete list of all of our Depots and Dealers please visit
www.turfrevolution.com

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

IPM Symposium 2011: “Changes, Challenges and Choices”

*by Mark Goodman,
IPM Committee Chair*

It was over 45 years ago that a group of individuals created what was to become the Integrated Pest Management Symposium. The symposium was developed to share information and research between the various sector groups such as nurserymen, arborists and professional turf managers. It began as a one day event in the Toronto area; however, it did not take long for the group to realize that they were missing a large number of interested parties across the province.

The IPM Symposium then went on the road to locations like London, Ottawa and Barrie in an effort to share information across the province. The challenge with this type of event has been to give a consistent message at each location. The same speakers needed to be booked and sent from venue to venue at a significant cost to the organizers. In most cases, the key speakers could only devote themselves to one or two dates. Therefore, not everyone got to hear about all of the innovative new practices or products.

In order to respond to this challenge in a cost-effective manner, the IPM committee has now decided to hold one symposium in Toronto on January 10, 2011. This date is just prior to Congress and many members from the various sector groups will be in town to take part in the seminars and attend the show.

This new format allows the committee to bring some of the most knowledgeable people in the industry to one location and

have them share their experience and best practices with everyone. With all of the challenges that our industry now faces, from a tool box that has been decimated by government regulations to staffing and budgetary short falls, there has never been a greater need to share information. This year, with the new advances in technology, it will now be possible to record the symposium or even stream it live to anyone that wants to take part, no matter where they are in the world.

The IPM committee has taken the responses from last year's questionnaires and developed a program filled with relevant topics. Once again, Pam Charbonneau will present an update from the GTI and OMAFRA on the research they have been doing to find new solutions for our industry and its ever changing marketplace.

Dr. Brownridge from the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre will present some interesting new research on Nematodes. Many of you may have heard him speak at the Toronto Symposium last year. This year, he has been given more time to cover his research and results in a more in-depth manner.

Cam Wilson from Neudroff is making the trip in from B.C. to share more information with everyone on Alternative Weed Control Products such as Fiesta and how it works.

The Ministry of the Environment will have an update on the Cosmetic Pesticide Ban as it relates to Compliance and

Enforcement. They are also going to share some interesting results from the Rban Stream Water Pesticide Study that they have been conducting over the last few years.

One of the most fascinating parts of the day will be devoted to Dr. Roger Funk, from Davey Tree Expert, headquartered in Ohio. Dr. Funk has not spoken in Canada for a long time. With the big push towards “green” and the fact that many of our tools have been reduced or restricted, Dr. Funk is going to talk about Organic Science as it Relates to Nutrition and Soil Conditioning. Dr. Funk has a wealth of knowledge on a broad range of topics because Davey Tree offers a wide variety of services. A big part of their business is lawn care and Dr. Funk was instrumental in developing programs for Davey Tree that revolve around plant health care.

Dr. Funk started his career with Davey back in 1973 and has held numerous positions with them. He is internationally recognized as a leading authority on tree, lawn and landscape care and has spoken around the world. This is one speaker you don't want to miss at the symposium or at Congress.

Mark your calendars and register early for this year's IPM Symposium. January 10, 2011 will prove to be a day of positive change as we face the challenges of the industry together and make choices that will make a difference for the future of our industry and our communities.



Leafy Green Infrastructure: “Where green meets gray”

by Paul Ronan,
Executive Director
Ontario Parks Association

What exactly is Leafy Green Infrastructure? Well, we are more familiar with Gray Infrastructure: things like bridges, roads, water pipes, sewers and dams come readily to mind. This and many other types of Gray Infrastructure are absolutely essential in sustaining our ability to move around and live on this planet. Another absolutely essential form of Infrastructure is what we are calling Leafy Green Infrastructure.

Now you may ask why the word “Leafy”? Well, with the use — and sometimes over-use — of the word “Green” we want to make sure that it is clearly understood that Leafy Green Infrastructure is “alive and breathing” and producing chlorophyll. To give you a better idea, Leafy Green Infrastructure is focused on vegetative technologies such as greenways, restored and constructed wetlands including storm water ponds, urban forests, rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, living walls, turf, meadows, manicured natural areas, and community gardens — to name a few.

On a daily basis these technologies, are actively working to recharge our ground water, clean our surface water and reduce storm water runoff, while improving soil quality and stripping particulates from the air. Not only is our Green Infrastructure doing its thing “naturally,” it is providing jobs and career opportunities in a multitude of exciting and innovative areas. We know that until something is measured

and quantified it cannot be tracked, evaluated, or monitored in order to learn the impacts to the environment and our human condition.

Careers in measuring and assessing the following are just some of the opportunities toward sustaining our future: the effects of the urban heat island, storage of carbon from the atmosphere and its effects on climate change, biomass and solar power

productivity among employees and it reduces healthcare costs through healthy, active play for children, youth and seniors. As I travel across the province I see a very popular trend toward urban food production as community gardens are appearing in many municipalities. We know that communities socialize and come together in our parks, at our beaches, on our sports fields and within our forests and wetlands.

Improved property values, greater marketability of buildings and improved water quality are all well known benefits of our efforts to protect, maintain and expand our Leafy Green Infrastructure and bring both significant social and economic benefit to our communities.

Although many of us in the industry are aware of these benefits, the general public, our politicians and bureaucrats need to become more engaged and educated in what is required to ensure we can sustain this treasured and essential component of our health and well-being.

Stay tuned as the Ontario Parks Association, along with the other members of the Green Infrastructure Ontario coalition — Landscape Ontario, Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), Green Roofs for Healthy Cities, Leaf, and Evergreen — will be coming to a community near you to conduct community workshops in an effort to collect what our stakeholders are saying about how we can best strategize on sustaining the future of our Leafy Green Infrastructure.

In closing, please join us in helping to deliver OPA’s mandate of Protecting Tomorrow Today.



ONTARIO PARKS ASSOCIATION
*Protecting Tomorrow Today**

enhancements, and biodiversity of both flora and fauna are areas which require professional, well trained practitioners to gather and collate data.

Leafy Green Infrastructure directly impacts an improved attitude and



Welcome to the future of synthetic fertilizers

Turf Revolution has always been committed to providing professional turf managers and homeowners with the latest in environmentally friendly and sustainable products. It is this commitment that has enabled us to lead the industry with groundbreaking tools and technology. This year we are very proud to announce the launch of our new **SSN (Soluble Stabilized Nitrogen) Fertilizers**.

Turf Revolution's new stabilized nitrogen product represents an evolution in synthetic fertilizers. This new technology is quite literally light years ahead of the PCU or SCU fertilizers currently available on the market. Rather than simply increasing the thickness of the SCU or PCU coatings (the way that most manufacturers are doing), our products will utilize soluble stabilized nitrogen technology combined with a natural chelating agent.

These new fertilizers will increase nutrient availability and absorption and actually help to promote the growth of microbial life in the soil. They will feed steadily, over a longer period of time, and this will result in a healthier stand of turf.

All of the traditional slow-release fertilizers available on the market today use an SCU or PCU coating to control the release of nutrients. Unfortunately, both of these coatings are often damaged during the application of the fertilizer and break down quickly when exposed to heat, moisture or other environmental conditions. The result can be nitrate and phosphate contamination in our waterways.

Our soluble stabilized nitrogen fertilizers (SSN) are not as affected by these conditions and do not

contaminate the environment in the way that traditional fertilizers do. The industry has long needed a fertilizer like this and Turf Revolution has developed it. Isn't it about time that someone did it right?

The SSN fertilizers will be available in two phosphate-free granular formulations for the commercial market: 18-0-14 with 60% SSN and 18-0-14 60% SSN with a micronutrient mix package. We have also developed a liquid 18-0-6 SSN fertilizer that will be available in 2- to 10-litre jugs for those companies wishing to include a liquid feed in any of their programs. The liquid is still a stabilized nitrogen product and because of this, it will still feed the turf for six to eight weeks. That's right: a liquid fertilizer that will last up to eight weeks — and it's environmentally friendly. This is the first time that a product like this has been offered to turf management professionals outside of the golf course industry.

For our retailers we have developed a phosphate-free 25-0-10 with 50% SSN to sell to the homeowner. The best news for our industry is that, despite the fact that these fertilizers are better than anything currently available on the market today, the cost of these products will be competitive with — and in some cases cheaper than — the products offered by our competitors.

Now you can protect the environment, promote healthy turf and increase your level of customer satisfaction, all while increasing your margins. You deserve the best synthetic fertilizer possible and thanks to Turf Revolution, now you have it.

Real Science. Real Solutions. Real Success. At Turf Revolution, we mean **green**.



Top 10 Green Initiatives

- 1 All natural ingredients
- 2 Local ingredients/manufacturing to reduce carbon footprint
- 3 100% recyclable packaging
- 4 Products safe around pets, people, waterways
- 5 Our soil tests reduce pesticide use
- 6 Stabilized Nitrogen sources
- 7 Environmentally sustainable turf management seminars and training
- 8 We sponsor and drive environmental stewardship initiatives.
- 9 We partner with and support other green companies
- 10 Our team is 100% biodegradable

Join the Revolution.

Try something new this year

by Jay Murray, CLP

If you use Turf Revolution products, then you're my kind of landscaper: someone prepared to try something new to get a different result. As a friend in business likes to remind me, if you keep doing the same old thing, you're going to get the same old result. If you want to improve your landscaping business and you're willing to try something new this year, consider focusing on productivity, especially the productivity of new hires.

From an operations standpoint, what's the same old thing? For most grounds maintenance companies, 50 – 60% annual turnover of employees and a direct labour cost that's 40 – 55% of revenue represents the same old thing. With your main expense in such a constant state of change, clearly you need an effective, cheap and easy training system. Is this a worthwhile investment? What's it cost anyway?

First, consider the costs of poor training to a grounds maintenance company owner with ten employees. With a monthly direct labour cost of about \$35,000 (all-in) and lots of expensive equipment that runs all day long, good training can deliver huge results. He will typically fill those ten positions with 15 or 16 different people over the course of a year, not to mention temps whom we aren't counting — extra shovellers for a major snow event, for example. This company might well do 20–25 T-4 employee earnings summaries for the tax department every February just for ten positions.

Now multiply those employees by the six or eight pieces of maintenance equipment each will use, plus WHMIS/MSDS training, truck and trailer training, fuel handling, and some personal safety training (stretching, bending and lifting, sun safety, digging hazards, poison ivy, etc.) and your training needs are daunting! Twenty guys times ten things to train them on. Wow, maybe you should just stick to the same old thing: "on the job training"? Fine, but be prepared for the same old result: disappointing productivity, damaged equipment, average quality, underwhelmed clients and... oh

yeah...plenty of frustration.

Or, accept that employee turnover is a fact of life, and build a training program for your company. The simplest approach: each day for two weeks, gather two of your best employees for 20 minutes (2–2–20). Take one piece of equipment each session, set it down in front of you, and make a list of the following:



Important Parts and their Function:

Example for a string trimmer: engine/fuel tank, primer, choke, throttle, spark plug; loop handle, shaft, gear box, line spool, trimmer line. No detail required, just make a bullet list.

Important Operating Techniques:

Example for string trimmer: trimming along buildings, fences, kids' pools, garden beds, walkways; around trees, vertical edging; changing the trimmer line; refuelling.

Hazard Awareness: First, list all the ways the employee can be injured while using the equipment — we'll call them Personal Hazards. Example for string trimmer: object thrown from trimmer into face or eyes; noise from engine; debris thrown onto legs. List everything that's reasonable of which you are aware.

Bystander Hazards: How co-workers, customers and public bystanders might be injured. In the case of a string trimmer: thrown objects, engine noise. And finally,

Property Hazards: How can the operator damage the equipment or damage customer property with the equipment? Example,

again, for string trimmer: trimmer can be damaged in transport; shaft will bend if stepped on. Lots of potential property damage: fence posts, tree bark, kid's pools, vinyl siding on homes, air conditioner cooling fins.

And there you have it: how the trimmer works, how to use it, and hazard awareness. You should have a checklist now with about 50 items. Have an assistant pretty up the lists with nifty little check boxes, and save them all to a directory called "Training Checklists", and voilà: you have a training system.

When you hire a new person, use the checklist as your training guide, checking each box as you explain the machine. Both you and the employee can "sign-off" on the checklist when you're done, and make sure you keep this in his/her file in case there's an injury or the Ministry/OSHA comes knocking. You should be able to train an employee in about an hour on each piece of equipment.

More important than just being safe, you will have productive employees, making fewer mistakes, who have the basic training needed to fit in with a crew and do a quality job for your clients right from the start. So in 2011, try something new and watch your profits improve.

Jay Murray, CLP is a Certified Horticulturist with 25 years' experience in the landscape business. He ran a \$5M landscape company before 'retiring' to create the online Landscape Safety Training System. Check it out at LandscapeSafety.com.

If you don't have time to make your own system, or maybe you want a premium system, LS Training System consists of 24 online equipment training videos for maintenance, construction, and golf courses, each with a 20 – 30 minute video and an online exam, which the employee can do at home or at work. Plus we have a Training Checklist template for each piece of equipment, which you can customize to suit your operation, and an online tracking system to assign and track your employee training.

Our Side of the Fence

by Clay & Sandy Green

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about trends. The other day I noticed a disturbing trend in regards to Clay. As the hair on his head is receding, it seems to be springing up in new and unusual places on his body. I think this condition is the reason that I see so many men at my spa now. They're taking care of their feet, getting things waxed and, in general, paying a little more attention to their appearance.

On the positive side, I've also noticed a new trend when it comes to my husband's taste in art. There was a time when to Clay, "art" meant a photograph of an anorexic, surgically enhanced woman in a bathing suit sprawled across the hood of a sports car. I always thought it looked more like a picture of a hit and run accident at a bathing suit competition. I was almost happy when, as Clay matured, "art" became black-and-white pictures of some sports team seated around some kind of trophy that they won about a hundred years ago.

This trend is continuing. The other day I heard Clay move smoothly from a discussion on the Black Hawks' chances of winning another Stanley Cup to whether or not Van Gogh might have had an influence on the paintings of Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven. I have to admit that I nearly fell off of my chair.

Usually, we think of trends in our industry as something to do with retailers, but I really want to focus on the opportunities that trends offer to maintenance and construction professionals.

We've seen retailers take full advantage



of the revived interest in growing your own vegetables, but I haven't noticed very many installation companies offering to build the vegetable beds. Raised beds make the soil easier to work and amend and can help to keep unwanted visitors away from the crops. Most homeowners would welcome any help when it comes to positioning and building their vegetable garden beds.

Water is fast becoming another big issue. Our supplies of fresh water have been steadily decreasing over the last 50 years. There has been a significant drop in the last ten years alone. Installing rain barrels, building retention ponds, installing permeable pavers and improving a soil's ability to retain moisture are just a few of the lucrative opportunities that grow out of the water conservation trend.

I have noticed a few companies promoting the use of native plant materials in their garden designs. There is a growing concern among many people over the loss of native habitats for much of our wildlife. As pesticides come under increasing scrutiny, choosing native plants that have a greater resistance to

diseases and insects also makes a lot of sense. Offering these services to clients can certainly help to improve your bottom line.

Last week, I saw a brilliant piece of marketing. A local company was promoting their tree planting service. Their flyer talked about the many benefits of trees, but focused mostly on a tree's ability to remove carbon from the atmosphere. We are all conscious of the need to reduce our carbon footprint and this flyer promoted planting trees as a quick and easy way to do this. Now *that* is the way to turn a trend into an opportunity!

The best part about all of this is that we can make a living doing what those of us in the green industry do best: protecting and preserving the environment that we all care so much about. This is our chance to shine and become advocates for sustainable living and healthy communities.

Well, it's time for dinner and another new "Clay trend" — fusion cooking. Tonight he's making chocolate covered chicken wings. Come to think of it, some trends really should just be fads.

CONTEST ENTRY BALLOT

Company Name

Contact Name

Phone Number

Email

Address



**THE \$10,000
BIG GREEN
GIVEAWAY!**