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Turfgrass Producers
International
2 East Main Street
East Dundee, IL 60118
Tel: 847/649-5555
Tel: 800/405-8873
Fax: 847/649-5678
Email:
info@TurfGrassSod.org
Website:
www.TurfGrassSod.org
Comments & Submissions:
inovak@TurfGrassSod.org

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Does being a TPI member carry any weight? More than you might think.

Larry Martinson of Martinson Sod & Grading in Center Point, Iowa recently contacted TPI's Membership & Marketing Manager, Veronica Iwanski to become a TPI member. During the course of the conversation Larry mentioned he and his brother Dale, along with their father Larry Sr., run the farm. Veronica also learned that Larry's grandfather founded the family-owned company in 1949.

The Martinson's had joined TPI back in 1971 when it was known as ASPA. Larry was just a kid at the time and has few memories of those early years. But at some point they parted company with ASPA/TPI although Larry doesn't recall the reason or the circumstances. The years passed and business seemed to go on as usual, but in recent years the Martinson's began to notice that more and more prospective customers (i.e., contractors, commercial landscapers, sports field managers, etc.) were asking the Martinson's for certification that they were members of TPI. Larry Sr. said the question had been coming up quite frequently depending on who was writing the specs or drafting the contract. He also said it varied from job to job. When asked if the inquiries had to do with turfgrass sod certification, Larry senior said, "No, they just wanted to know if we're certified TPI members."

The Martinson's began to think that one of the major benefits of being a TPI member wasn't just what the association had to offer, but also the perception on the part of their customers regarding their knowledge, professionalism and the quality of their product and service.

Although they have been operating a success-

ful business for well over 40 years, some customers wanted assurance that they were members of Turfgrass Producers International.

We're not sure if other members have fielded similar inquiries, or if it's the beginning of a trend, but this story does serve to suggest that by featuring the TPI logo on your website, Facebook page or in your advertising or promotional literature, you may be giving yourself an edge over the competition when it comes to how your customers perceive your business.

TPI plans to encourage buyers to look for the

**For Quality Turfgrass Sod
Look for Growers Featuring this Logo**



TPI logo when selecting a turfgrass producer in their area. Featuring the TPI logo may be one of the strongest marketing tools available to you - - **USE IT!**

Members can access the TPI logo* by going to the following (Members Only) link on the TPI website:

<http://www.turfgrasssod.org/assets/2/logos-and-standards>

*** Use of the TPI logo is an exclusive member benefit. Unauthorized use by non-members is strictly prohibited.**

Weathering the Weather

Did you think last year's weather was a bit of a challenge? It was! There were 3,527 monthly weather records broken for heat, rain, and snow in the US, according to information from the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC).

In fact, 2012 has gone down in the record books as the warmest year ever recorded in the US, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) State of the Climate.

Last summer was the worst drought in 50 years across the nation's breadbasket, with over 1,300 US counties across 29 states declared drought disaster areas. 2012 recorded the hottest March on record in the contiguous US, and July was the hottest single month ever recorded in the lower 48 states.

The top ten states where new heat records were established included Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Maine, Minnesota, Nevada, Tennessee, Wisconsin and West Virginia.

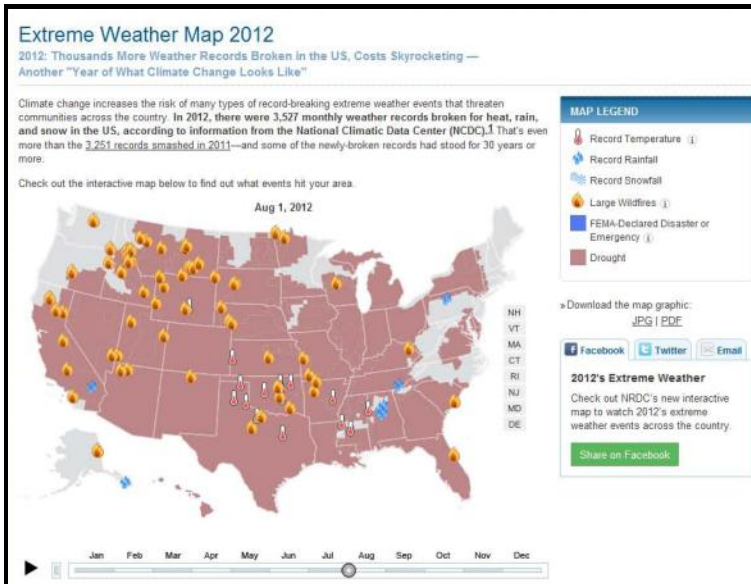
Heat wasn't the only factor in what proved to be a weather-devastating year. Wildfires burned over 9.2 million acres in the US, and destroyed hundreds of homes. Hurricane Sandy's storm surge height of 13.88 feet, broke the all-time record in New York Harbor, and ravaged communities across New Jersey and New York with floodwaters and winds.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) revealed that 2012 surpassed the 3,251 weather records that were smashed in 2011, with record-breaking heat, rainfall and snow events catalogued by state.

NOAA has estimated that 2012 will surpass 2011 in aggregate costs for U.S. annual billion-dollar disasters, in large part due to the trails of destruction from superstorm Sandy and the yearlong drought.

2012's Extreme Weather Map

Check out NRDC's new interactive map to watch 2012's extreme weather events across the country at: <http://www.nrdc.org/health/extremeweather/default.asp>



TurfSide-UP

ADMIT IT FOLKS... this is a smart cat!



This little tidbit in “TurfSide-Up” may generate more reader response than anything else we’ve ever printed. Here’s the question - **Who’s Smarter – Dogs or Cats?**

We’ve learned that researchers at CanCog Technologies, a private institution in Toronto that studies the behavior of companion animals, have tested dogs and cats on the same tasks to see which was smarter. The results, presented at conferences but yet to be published, seem to indicate that cats cannot learn the complex tasks that dogs can learn. Gary Landsberg, a veterinary behaviorist who works with CanCog suggests this could mean that (1) cats are not as cognitively capable as dogs, or (2) that their brains work differently, or (3) it could be that differences in motivation account for some of the variation. On the other hand, the physiology of dog and cat brains seems to suggest that cats have the advantage. While brain size isn’t a good indicator of intelligence, the number of neurons could be. Cats have 300 million neurons to dogs’ who have a mere 160 million.

We know this has nothing to do with turfgrass or greenspace, but the above photo was so appealing we had to come up with something.

To read more: [CLICK HERE](http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/cats-dogs-pet-smarter-article-1.1008331)
<http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/cats-dogs-pet-smarter-article-1.1008331>



MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

A Tip of the Hat to Patten Seed Co/Super Sod in Lakeland, Georgia

While there’s no denying that every turfgrass producer is vying for business in a competitive marketplace, let’s not lose sight of the fact that members helping members benefits all of us and reinforces the strength of TPI and our membership as a whole. Case in point:

When homeowner Mark Seefeld in Arkansas, requested a quotation from Patten Seed Co./ Super Sod in Lakeland, Georgia for the delivery of 2700 square feet of Tifway Bermuda sod and Tall Fescue for a residential lawn, he was advised that the distance between the two locations (over 600 miles) made shipping impractical.

The inquiry could have ended there but it didn’t, it was recommended that Mark go to TPI’s website <http://www.turfgrassod.org/dealers/t/turfgrass-sod-producers> to find a TPI qualified sod producer near his area.

We have since learned from Dr. Tim Bowyer, of Patten Seed Company/Super-Sod that they have a turfgrass sod page and if a request comes from outside their delivery area they forward folks to the TPI producers search tool.

A “Tip of the Hat” to Patten Seed/Super Sod in Lakeland, Georgia for supporting fellow TPI members.

GAME CHANGER? — American Academy of Neurology releases new guidelines on sports concussions

“Among other findings by the committee, it was noted that concussions are more prevalent when athletes play on artificial turf.” — ABC News Radio - March 19, 2013

Thomas Northcut/Thinkstock (NEW YORK) -- A million or so U.S. athletes receive a blow to the head serious enough to cause a "concussion" injury to the brain each year, according to the American Academy of Neurology. Based on new guidelines for evaluating and managing concussions released Monday by the Academy, coaches and medical professionals will be expected to handle cases much differently than many have in the past.

The new guidelines call for any athlete suspected of having a concussion to be immediately removed from play and not returned until after an assessment by a licensed health care professional trained in concussion. The recommendations stress a gradual return to the game -- and only after all symptoms are gone. "If in doubt, sit it out," said Dr. Christopher Giza, a children's neurologist at the University of California in Los Angeles and one of the lead authors of the guidelines that were published Monday in the online issue of the journal *Neurology*. "There is no set timeline for safe return to play."

The old guidelines, in use since 1997, grade the severity of concussion on a scale of I to III. Most experts classify a mild concussion when the athlete is confused but has full memory of the event as Grade I. Typically, the athlete is told to sit on the sidelines for a few minutes before returning to play.

Grade III concussions are characterized by loss of consciousness and memory loss for a period of time surrounding the events. Athletes diagnosed with a Grade II or III concussion are usually asked to stop play and practice for at least a week and return after being cleared by a physician.

The problem with the old guidelines, Giza said, is that they don't emphasize prevention and aren't very good at predicting how long someone might experience symptoms such as headaches, dizziness and memory deficits, which can plague someone after the initial injury.

"Sometimes an athlete who is knocked unconscious will recover quickly, while an athlete who gets what seems like a small bump on the head struggles for weeks," he said.

The new guidelines were developed by reviewing all available evidence published from 1955 through 2012. Neurologists, athletic trainers, rehabilitation medicine specialists, sports medicine experts, epidemiologists and a host of other specialty experts contributed to the final recommendations.



Dr. Anthony Alessi, chairman of the sports neurology section for the Academy said the revised guidelines call for a more individualized approach to concussion management, including prevention, diagnosis and treatment. For example, athletes high school age and younger will now be treated more conservatively than collegiate athletes and pros because, Alessi pointed out, a growing body of evidence shows they take longer to recover from concussion.

The new guidelines are endorsed by a broad range of experts and professional groups including the National Football League Players Association and National Athletic Trainers Association.

Among other findings by the committee, it was noted that concussions are more prevalent when athletes play on artificial turf. Football and rugby carry the greatest risk for concussion, followed by hockey and soccer. Boxing and horse racing are also considered high-risk sports for brain injury and females are most likely to experience concussion in soccer or basketball.

Copyright 2013 ABC News Radio

Graff's Turf Farms Scores a Touchdown

Providing turfgrass to help rebuild two practice fields for the Denver Broncos in Dove Valley, Colorado might seem like a challenge, but Graff's Turf Farms has been specializing in sports turf since 1979 and they handle such jobs like seasoned professionals.



Graff's Turf Farms is known as one of the top farms in the country for producing high-performance sports turf and they understand the challenges faced by today's sports turf managers.

The Denver Broncos facility is situated on 13.5 acres in the Dove Valley Business Park in south Arapahoe County. The facility includes the Broncos Conditioning Center, three full-size practice fields, and an administrative building.

FIELDS, Inc., a sports general contractor known for building sports fields of distinction recently announced they had been chosen by the Denver Broncos to rebuild two natural grass practice fields at the Broncos Conditioning Center in Dove Valley, Colorado.

Additionally, FIELDS, Inc. will install a hydronic heating system under both practice fields to prevent the turf from freezing, providing additional player safety by allowing the team to practice year-round on climate-controlled natural grass. FIELDS, Inc. will complete the project this spring.

TPI members **James Graff** and **Marty Thiel**, co-owners of Graff's Turf Farms in Fort Morgan, Colorado will be providing the turf for the project. The sod is scheduled to be delivered and installed later this month.



Denver Bronco's practice field in Dove Valley.

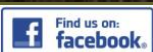


Graff's Turf Farms

Recent photos show Denver Bronco's practice field (top) being prepped for sod installation and (bottom) turf grown specifically for Dove Valley project prior to harvest at Graff's Turf Farms.

Crystal Green® Receives State Phosphorus Exemptions for Turf Applications

VANCOUVER, CANADA (January 30, 2013) – As the trend toward restricting the use of phosphorus-containing fertilizers on turfgrass continues, Crystal Green®, the world's first slow release, renewable and environmentally responsible phosphorus fertilizer, has been granted phosphorus exemptions in Michigan, Wisconsin and Virginia.



Where in the world is TPI represented? EVERYWHERE!

An on-going series featuring photos and copy from TPI member websites.

Turkçim
Istanbul, TURKEY

<http://www.turkçim.com/eng/index.html>



Turkçim will be celebrating their 15th anniversary this year. Since their founding they have been improving their production techniques and product range and are now considered one of the outstanding producers to turfgrass in the region.



In 2007, **Ferit Gulener**, founder of Turkçim (pictured above), reported they were the biggest turfgrass farm in Turkey and the Balkan region and produce ready natural rolled grass on what he described as a land the size of 400 football fields. While half of their product is acquired by private construction firms and the Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKI), municipalities acquire the rest. At the time Gulener also stated, "The increase in the number of villas in recent years has triggered the demand. Now people buy rolled grass just as if buying wall-to-wall carpets for their homes."

Their website reads:

"We have a professional team, the latest technology, and the most advanced seed varieties produced and harvested in a variety of sizes, shipped in rolls (standard and big rolls) of a natural living product. Six-mixtures of cool season grass seeds are fully grown in quality soil resulting in intense strong roots and a living carpet of vibrant, lush and natural turfgrass."



"Harvested turf can be applied in a short time resulting in an immediate healthy, aesthetic appearance that's ready to use. Turf can be applied in any season."



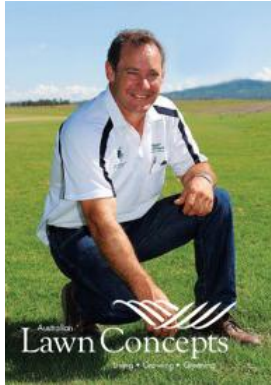
"Our products are shipped on pallets for easy transportation and the least amount of damage so installation can be done quickly and efficiently."

A proud Member of
Turfgrass Producers International
since 2000



NOTE: Website copy was translated from Turkish to English and required minor editing for clarity. - J. Novak





“Overseas producers face similar hurdles.”

TPI Member **John Keleher** of Australian Lawn Concepts in Canungra, Queensland, AUSTRALIA and Chairman of Turf Australia attended TPI’s Midwinter Conference in San Antonio and had a lot to say about the experience. He drafted an interesting article titled *“Overseas producers face similar hurdles”* that was featured in the March/

April issue of *Turf Craft International* magazine.

In the article John mentions that he attended the TPI Midwinter Conference for two reasons, “Firstly, to maintain/develop linkages and networks between Turf Australia and Turfgrass Producers International (TPI), and secondly, to determine the mechanisms used to benchmark some key production data from turf producers throughout the world.”

John went on to point out that there were common issues facing turf producers worldwide and that it was somewhat encouraging to know that his fellow producers in Australia don’t have to deal with a “plethora of problems alone”.

Among the issues addressed by various speakers from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and the United States were the negative perception of turf in the marketplace as it relates to water use; sustainability of turfgrass producers as it relates to lower profitability in recent years; the competition created by artificial turf, and some form of producer accreditation to create, as Keleher put it, “a platform of professionalism.”

He went on to add that fellow turfgrass producers had the opportunity to address these and other issues during TPI’s roundtable forum session.

Did John feel attending the TPI Midwinter Conference was worth his time and investment? He wrote the following at the close of his article—

“I believe producers should consider joining TPI to avail themselves to a great source of information and networking opportunities.”

TPI MEMBER BENEFIT—Credit Card Processing



TPI has teamed with TSYS Merchant Solutions (TSYS) to create a payment processing solution specifically for TPI Members that provides lower rates on credit/debit processing in addition to special pricing on electronic check guarantee service. Through the negotiating power of TPI, TSYS is pleased to present all TPI Members with a tremendous savings opportunity. For more information call 888-749-7860 or visit their website at www.tsysmerchantsolutions.com.

Be sure to mention that you are a TPI Member!

**TSYS named to
Ethisphere’s 2012
World’s Most Ethical
Companies List -**



The World’s Most Ethical (WME) Companies designation recognizes companies that truly go beyond making statements about doing business “ethically” and translate those words into action. WME honorees not only promote ethical business standards and practices internally, they exceed legal compliance minimums and shape future industry standards by introducing best practices today.



American Society of Landscape Architects' 2013 Residential Design Trends Survey Identifies Top Outdoor Living Trends



Washington, D.C., February 19, 2013—

American homeowners increasingly are drawn to adding outdoor rooms for entertaining and recreation on their properties, according to the 2013 Residential Landscape Architecture Trends survey conducted by the American Society of Landscape Architects. The results also show demand for both sustainable and low-maintenance design.

Landscape architects who specialize in residential design across the country were asked to rate the expected popularity of a variety of residential outdoor design elements in 2013. The category of outdoor living spaces, defined as kitchens and entertainment spaces, received a 94.5 percent rating as somewhat or very popular. It all but tied with gardens and landscaped spaces at 94.4 percent.

Across all categories, 97 percent of respondents rated fire pits and fireplaces as somewhat or very in-demand for 2013, followed by grills (96.3 percent), seating and dining areas (96.3 percent), and lighting (95.1 percent).

“In this uncertain economy, homeowners want to get more enjoyment out of their yards,” said ASLA Executive Vice President and CEO Nancy Somerville, Hon. ASLA. “They want attractive outdoor spaces that are both easy to take care of and sustainable.”

Decorative water elements—including waterfalls, ornamental pools, and splash pools—were predicted to be in demand for home landscapes (90.9 percent), Spas (81.5 percent) and pools (75.3 percent) are also expected to be popular.

Terraces, patios, and decks are high on people’s lists (97.6 percent), as are fencing (89.6 percent) and ornamental water features (84.2 percent). Americans still prefer such practical yet striking design elements for their gardens as low-maintenance landscapes (93.9 percent) and native plants (86.6 percent), with organic slightly increasing in popularity (65.3 percent compared to 61.2 percent in 2011).

In keeping with the local food movement, more people are opting for food and vegetable gardens, including orchards and vineyards (82.7 percent). Besides planting locally and organically, other sustainable elements continue their popularity with homeowners. Native or drought-tolerant plants (83 percent), drip irrigation (82.5 percent), permeable paving (72.8 percent) and reduced lawns (72.6 percent) are making their way into outdoor living spaces across the country.

Additional information on residential landscape architecture can be found at www.asla.org/residentialinfo.