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American Consumers Support Farmers and Biodiesel



The recent "**National Agriculture Image Survey**", a nationwide survey conducted by The United Soybean Board (USB) revealed that U.S. consumers strongly back U.S. farmers.

American Farmers

Although primarily focused on the public's perception of biodiesel, the study looked at consumers' perceptions of farmers, farm families and agribusiness. The survey results show 89 percent of consumers expressed a favorable image of U.S. farmers. Only 7 percent responded unfavorably, and the other 4 percent had no opinion. The participants were surveyed to see if their opinions toward farmers have changed in the past year and if they were more favorable or unfavorable. In general, the survey showed that the public has become more favorable toward farmers, believing they work hard and are "getting a raw deal," as one survey respondent noted. When asked if farmers are good citizens of their community, 82 percent of participants said "yes," while 18 percent thought farmers do not have a stake in their communities. "One survey respondent noted, "They are the backbone of the country."

Biodiesel Fuel



The survey also indicated 82 percent of consumers agree foreign oil-producing countries and the high cost of fuel impacting farming and processing, packaging, storing and shipping are to blame for food price increases, not U.S. farmers.

Other key findings show:

- **77%** of consumers favor the use of biodiesel as a source of energy that can meet our needs in the next 5 to 10 years.
- **74%** of consumers were more favorable toward biodiesel after hearing it benefits the environment.
- **70%** of consumers were more favorable toward biodiesel after hearing it's a new green industry that creates jobs.

For additional information contact: Lisa Cassady or Chris Krull at Osborn & Barr Communications, 888-235-4332. For a digital version of this news release in its entirety go to the USB Website:

www.unitedsoybean.org.

FEEDBACK

Vincent Van Gogh's Mystery Woman Found Under a "Patch of Grass"

"Patch of Grass"

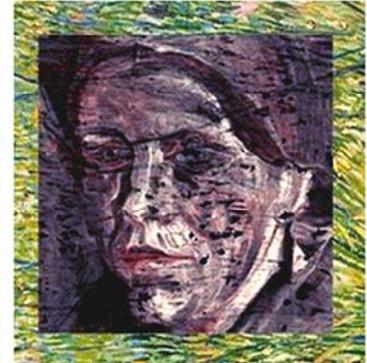
As it appears at the Kröller-Müller Museum in the Netherlands.



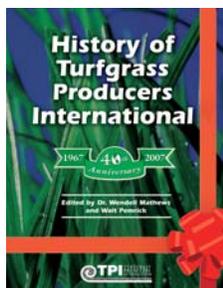
New X-ray technology reveals van Gogh's mystery woman under painting.



Vertical view (above) with enlarged image to the right. →



A previously unknown portrait of a woman by Vincent van Gogh has been revealed in a high-tech look beneath one of his paintings. Scientists used a new technique to peer beneath the paint of van Gogh's "Patch of Grass." Van Gogh was known to paint over his work, perhaps as much as a third of the time. Behind the painting, done mostly in greens and blues, is a portrait of a woman rendered in browns and reds. The new X-ray technique is based on "synchrotron radiation induced X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy" and is said to be an improvement on X-ray radiography, which has been used to reveal concealed layers of other famous paintings. The new method measures chemical in the pigments. Specifically, mercury and the element antimony were useful in revealing the woman's face. The work was done by researchers at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands and the University of Antwerp in Belgium, along with help from other institutions. "Patch of Grass" was painted by van Gogh in Paris in 1887 and is owned by the Kröller-Müller Museum in the Netherlands.



Holiday Gifts for Family, Friends, Employees and Customers



Be Sure to Place Your Order Early

Looking for something unique and different to give to family, friends, employees and customers during the coming holidays? How about the "**History of Turfgrass Producers International**"? Over two hundred pages of history and plenty of photos provide an interesting overview of TPI's 40 year history and the history of the turfgrass industry. For loved ones who enjoy cooking, The Lawn Institute's "**Mow Food, Please**" cookbook has recipes for delicious main dishes to deserts and everything in-between. And if you want to give a gift that reminds people about the importance of green spaces year round, you might consider Project EverGreen's "**2009 Calendar**" in which TPI is the "Month of April" featured sponsor. To get an order form for "**History of Turfgrass Producers International**" contact Veronica Iwanski at viwanski@TurfGrassSod.org. For ordering the cookbook or calendar visit the following websites:



"**Mow Food, Please**" Cookbook
<http://www.thelawninstitute.org/education/?c=186390>



Project EverGreen 2009 Calendar
<http://www.projectevergreen.com/pdf/>

TurfSide-UP



There's nothing quite like walking a-round town barefoot on real grass . . . As for parking your grass, . . . uhh, now that could pose a bit of a problem.

A TIP OF THE HAT

to **Dr. John Stier** who was recently named the new Chair of the University of Wisconsin - Madison, Horticulture Dept.

Dr. Stier is the Professor and Extension Specialists for Environmental Turfgrass Science at UW-Madison and has been an active educator for Wisconsin's green industry.

In addition to his duties at UW-Madison he also provides turfgrass and environmental education both nationally and internationally.



Dr. John Stier

University of Wisconsin—Madison

Dr. John Stier has been an active participant in TPI's Public Relations Working Group and Turfgrass Extension Specialists meeting since its introduction in April 2005.

DISCOVER HOW YOUR FOUNDATION IS REACHING OUT

Have You Visited **The Lawn Institute** Website?



www.TheLawnInstitute.org



Over 65,000 visitors and growing everyday

Recipe For Biodiesel

When Christopher S. Gray Sr., superintendent and general manager of the Marvel Golf Club in Benton, KY started using vegetable oil to make biodiesel three years ago, it was mainly due to his staunch environmental principles. Chris always felt that biofuels were the best environmental option for fueling his diesel equipment. Although the economics of using vegetable oil to make biodiesel was never his primary motive for developing and implementing his alternative fuel program, his innovative thinking has helped him keep his maintenance budget in line as the nation faced higher diesel fuel prices.



Christopher Gray, Sr. fills-up on his home recipe for biodiesel fuel.

In 2000, biodiesel became the only alternative fuel in the U.S. to have successfully completed the EPA-required Tier I and Tier II health effects under the Clean Air Act. What this means is that biodiesel significantly reduces all regulated emissions while posing no threat to human health. Biodiesel also provides a positive net energy balance. According to the National Biodiesel Board, "for every unit of energy that is required to produce a gallon of biodiesel, 3.24 units of energy are gained."

According to Chris, "Biodiesel is a fuel that can be used directly in any diesel engine without physical modifications to the engine. This characteristic alone makes this alternative fuel very attractive. It does, however, require that vegetable oil (new or used) go through a chemical process called transesterification, where the glycerin is separated from the oil by replacing the glycerol bond with alcohol. When the process is successfully completed, the viscosity of the base vegetable oil has been significantly reduced to the point of being similar to that of petroleum diesel fuel." Rather than purchase biodiesel from a local supplier, Chris found it much more cost effective to produce his own. His recipe for making biodiesel produces about 35 gallons to 40 gallons, depending on the quality of the oil used.

If you are interested in seeing Chris Gray's complete recipe for developing your own biodiesel fuel visit www.Golfdom.com and SEARCH - **Biofuels Help Power Kentucky Operation**. Or contact Jim Novak at jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org. Chris Gray can also be reached at cgray@marvelgolf.com.

A Note of Thanks

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Larry Aylward, editor of **Golfdom** magazine and author Chris Gray for allowing us to share this information with our readers.

Golfdom

Collaborative Effort to Promote Natural Grass Pays Dividends at 2008 ASLA Annual Meeting & Expo



"We needed to work together to get the truth out about the benefits of "natural" green grass."

- **Christian H. Broucsault**
Vice President, Marketing
Sod Solutions



Earlier this month at the *American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Annual Meeting & Expo* in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, four companies came together in a collaborative effort to get the truth out about the benefits of "natural" green grass and to debunk some of the marketing claims of the synthetic turf industry which is always well represented at such shows.

In addition to sharing a 20 X 20 island booth at the show, Barenbrug USA, Sod Solutions, RTF and Todd Valley Farms also joined forces with a full page ad that appeared in *Landscape Architect* promoting their "GREEN" Grass Information Center booth at the show.

Each company promoted their own products during the show, but they are to be congratulated for presenting a unified message regarding the facts about natural grass and artificial turf.

Christian Broucsault of Sod Solutions estimated that nearly 250 copies of the booklet, "*Natural Grass and Artificial Turf: Separating Myths and Facts*" were distributed during the show. He went on to add, "The response was so favorable that we are definitely collaborating again at the *Landscape Industry Show* in Los Angeles this coming February and at the *2009 ASLA Annual Meeting & Expo* in Chicago."



Related Note: The collaboration on the part of TPI members to communicate the benefits of turfgrass (as illustrated in the above story) benefits everyone in the turfgrass industry. TPI's board and staff attend numerous trade shows throughout the year in an effort to promote "The Benefits of Turfgrass". A TPI representative currently plans to do a presentation at *The Maryland Turfgrass Association Fall Workshop* next month in Annapolis, Maryland. TPI also plans to be visible at the *2009 Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Conference & Exposition* this coming January in San Jose, CA. These are only two of the many upcoming industry-related conferences, conventions and meetings in which TPI plans to heighten its visibility and communicate the "Benefits of Turfgrass" to a broad and diversified audience.

Possible Ban on St. Augustine Grass in Lake County, Florida? **NOT SO FAST!**

"The main purpose of this ordinance is to save water; it's not a plant or variety issue. It's a usage issue."
TPI Board Member and Florida Sod Growers Cooperative Board Member —**Dave Dymond**



"Simply **banning a grass** instead of encouraging methods for water conservation doesn't get (Lake County) commissioners to the ultimate goal of saving water."

David Dymond
TPI Board Member
Florida Sod Growers Cooperative
Board Member

"The goal here is not to ban anything, it's to conserve water,"
Lake County Commissioner—**Linda Stewart**

Lake County, Florida commissioners appear to be backing away from a proposed ban on St. Augustine grass on new homes and developments, thanks to the efforts of representatives from Florida's sod industry who asked commissioners to re-think their proposed ruling. The ban was to be part of a new landscape ordinance. Industry leaders persuasively argued that irrigation controls, water-saving technologies and education would be more effective than banning a grass that can sometimes be more resilient than other drought-resistant varieties. "Simply banning a grass instead of encouraging methods for water conservation doesn't ultimately save water", said David Dymond, board member with the Florida Sod Growers Cooperative and general manager of H&H Sod Co., Inc. He added, "The main purpose of this ordinance is to save water; it's not a plant or variety issue. It's a usage issue." Commissioner Linda Stewart appeared to agree stating, "The goal here is not to ban anything, it's to conserve water." The county's original plans suggested banning St. Augustine grass from any new home or commercial developments as part of an effort to reduce irrigation. Keith Truenow, director of the Florida Sod Growers Association and owner of Lake Jem Farms stated, "If homeowners researched and knew exactly how to irrigate efficiently and correctly, they could still have green lawns without wasting water."