

A Better Fertilizer, *Naturally!*

A start-up developer of natural fertilizers for the turfgrass industry gets assistance from IPRT and Iowa State University and launches new product.

FOUR ALL SEASONS, L.L.C. OF HOLSTEIN, IOWA, IS A start-up company developing natural fertilizers for the turfgrass industry made from co-products of the ethanol manufacturing process. IPRT company assistance helped the company set up and run cost-sharing research projects at Iowa State University. Carey Novak, an IPRT technology transfer associate, also assisted the company with business development. Delayne Johnson, president of Four All Seasons, L.L.C. says the effort helped his company get vital research done and make contacts in the turfgrass industry.



Novak says, “This is a great project in the sense that the company is commercializing a new product that uses co-products being produced at a nearby ethanol plant. I think there are many more opportunities for new products being developed that can take advantage of the ethanol industry in Iowa. These kinds of projects can have a big economic impact in rural Iowa.”

Four All Seasons, L.L.C. is owned by Galva Holstein Ag, L.L.C. and Johnson who were both instrumental in the creation of Quad County Corn Processors, a 30-million-gallon ethanol plant near Galva, Iowa. Novak is now working with the company to create other value-added products that can be made from ethanol using technology developed at IPRT and ISU.

IPRT

The Proof is in the Plot

IPRT helped fund research performed by Nick Christians, a university professor of horticulture at ISU and a nationally known expert in the turfgrass industry. Christians did lab analysis of the Four All Seasons Bio-Source Natural Fertilizer and then tested and documented its performance over two growing seasons on ISU test plots.

The research compared Four All Season’s Bio-Source Natural Fertilizer to industry standards, according to Christians. Christians had both undergraduate and graduate students work on the project, along with visiting professor Dr. Young Joo of Yonsei University of Korea. Johnson states, “The ISU data is helping us market our product and provides a valuable third-party comparison to our competitors and others.”

Ready to Launch

The efforts by IPRT and ISU have also helped the company develop key contacts within the state and area with a number of people who helped the company move its product from an idea to something that can be sold. Johnson also gives high marks to IPRT’s Novak. “Carey is one of the reasons we are where we’re at today, and we are grateful for his assistance in this process,” says Johnson.

In 2006, the company will launch its Bio-Source Natural Fertilizer. The company received a “100% bio-based certification” from USDA. Its product is proven to release nitrogen evenly and is low in phosphorus content. The fertilizer contains no petroleum-based ingredients and is safe to use. The dry pellet fertilizer is available in 50-pound bags or bulk and can be used in existing equipment.



Delayne Johnson, president of Four All Seasons, L.L.C., kneels next to his company’s plot at the “2005 Turfgrass Field Day” trial held at Iowa State University. IPRT and ISU helped the start-up company test its natural fertilizer and get it ready for market.