

CUTT

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McTurf: A Model for the Turfgrass Industry

It's not enough for those who work in turf maintenance to talk about being environmentally responsible; they must prove it, especially to those who believe otherwise. Changing the perceptions that some hold about the golf industry's effects on the environment might even help grow the game.

An environmental movement in golf needs two things to be successful: demand from customers and an industry leader to set the standards. The demand for environmental stewardship—from within and outside the industry—already exists. But what's missing is a leader willing to step forward to set standards and effect change. Once that happens, getting the market to embrace those standards should be relatively easy. 

A Fast-Food Model

An example of how this approach can work has taken place in the fast-food industry. A report in the Feb. 20, 2005 edition of *The New York Times* outlined the ripple effects on the apple industry caused by McDonald's Apple Dippers snack.

In response to a demand for healthier fast food options, McDonald's launched a line of items, including fresh apple slices, aimed at health-conscious consumers. According to *The New York Times* report, McDonald's instantly became the nation's largest buyer of apples, purchasing more than 54 million pounds this year.

With this level of buying power, McDonald's has the ability to exercise its influence on the apple industry. When a representative from the company communicated to apple growers that McDonald's prefers such varieties as cameo and pink lady (neither of which are widely grown) because of their flavor and crispness, production of both types skyrocketed. For example, production of cameo apples in Washington—which produces more than half of all apples grown in the United States—shot up 58 percent so far this year.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, apples are one of the world's most

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