

# Grounds Management Newsletter

HORTICULTURAL TRADES ASSOCIATION  
landscapeontario.com  
 Green for Life!

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## Prosperity Partners seeks help from grounds management firms



**By Jacki Hart CLP**  
Prosperity Partners  
program manager

LO's Prosperity Partners program invites members to share and benefit from our Best Practices initiative.

We are looking for each company in the management sector to share at least one template it uses to help keep its people, information, projects, inventory,

training, equipment, etc., organized.

A template is simply a Word or Excel document that is related to the operation of your business. The idea is to create a living library of resources, which can be tweaked by another business owner to help make his work just a bit easier.

All templates submitted will have any identifying information

(your company name, etc.) removed, so that all templates are generic and will be renamed as ABC Landscaping.

Templates will be organized by the Prosperity Pillars: financial health, sales success, leadership, professional operations and customers for life.

The idea is that by contributing, you will have access to the growing library of templates donated to the program by your peers. The Prosperity Partners Template Library is available to all candidates who have completed the Best Practices component of the program, and to our peers (YOU!), who contribute content for the development of the template library.

Templates will be available online, via a link to the Best Practices portal.

To submit a template for the library, please forward it to Jacki Hart, program manager, [prosperity@landscapeontario.com](mailto:prosperity@landscapeontario.com).

## There are options to fight weeds

**By Anthony Kampen**

Now that the provincial pesticide ban has become a reality, what has your company done to deal with weed problems?

At our most recent Grounds Management sector group meeting, we allowed ourselves to wander off topic to discuss this very question. We came up with a wide variety of strategies that have proven effective. Through this sharing of ideas, we all left that meeting with more options to add to our toolbox.

So, just what is going on in the industry? Some have chosen to fight the onslaught of weeds in turf by focusing on the soil. Nurturing the microbial life that exists in the soil will create a growing environment suitable for the turf to out-compete weed species. Using biologically active compost as a topdressing material is an important part of this process. It gives good results when combined with other cultural practices like aerating, over-seeding, proper watering and proper cutting.

In situations where weeds already exist, removal may be required with an item such as a manual weed puller, which is effective when weed populations aren't too high. However, hand weeding is labour-intensive and effective only on clumping weeds. For the more adventurous, weed flamers are available and especially useful for getting rid of weeds growing through hard surfaces. Extreme caution is necessary when working near structures, as non-targeted areas may catch fire. In more ecologically sensitive areas, hot water may be the best approach. One company supplies their crews with electric kettles. This enables them to kill weeds and enjoy a cup of tea while doing it. Fatty acids and acetic acid are also available as non-selective spray solutions, though repeated applications are often necessary to achieve a kill.

As you can see, options are available. Not all options make sense in all circumstances, but through experimentation you will be able to find something that works for you.

# LO Trial Garden growing in many forms

By **Rodger J. Tschanz**

University of Guelph trial garden manager

The trial gardens at LO will double in size this year, but that's not the only change that will occur in the three-year old project.

In 2007 and 2008, the Grounds Management sector group of LO and the Department of Plant Agriculture at the University of Guelph worked together to start the landscape trial program.

This year, interest from other sectors will see the trial program expand not just in size, but in use by other aspects of the industry. The Grounds Management group created a sub-committee that will bring additional focus to the trial garden through representation from the Ontario Parks Association, the irrigation and garden centre sectors, and LO's education, marketing and communication departments to help grounds maintenance and the University of Guelph with the project. Together we hope to capitalize on all of the opportunities for education, research and extension that the trial program offers.

The footprint for the 2009 trial, at 12,000 square feet, will be more than twice the size of last season's garden. This year will also include perennials and a shade trial area.

The OPA hopes that municipalities will participate in its Mixed Basket Competition at the trial site. In this competition, municipalities plant 12-14 in. wire/cocofibre baskets, using their choice of plant materials and soil mixes. The baskets will be delivered to the trial site, where they will be grown until the end of the summer. All baskets will be fertilized and watered identically.

As a new component of the open house, this year the public will be invited to tour the gardens on Aug. 20 between 2:00 and 7:00 p.m. Visitors will have the opportunity to vote for their favourite basket.

Confirmed suppliers include Blooms of Bressingham and Darwin Plants and annual suppliers Proven Winners, Ball Horticulture, PanAmerican Seed, Goldsmith Seeds, Sakata Seeds and George Sant Greenhouses.

This year's open house agenda on August 20th has been expanded as well. The day's program for the horticultural industry is scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. and will include a short speaker program, where trial garden suppliers will talk about their products and sub-committee members will reflect about the highlights of the 2009 trials. Small groups of visitors will be given the opportunity to accompany a tour guide through the trial site. Voting on favourite trial garden plants will take place again this year. Lunch is scheduled from 11:30 to 12:30. Those interested in traveling to the Guelph Trial Garden for guided tours of the flower and turf research plots can do so, following lunch.



## Profile:

### **Anthony Kampen**

**Vice president, grounds maintenance  
Boot's Landscaping and Maintenance Ltd.,  
Toronto**

Anthony Kampen began his career in horticulture at the age of 11, working Saturdays raking the grass left behind by reel mowers. Over the years, he spent his summers working on a maintenance crew, eventually filling the position of assistant foreman.

After completing high school, Kampen attended university to study for a business degree. But for him the lure of horticulture was too strong. After a year and a half at York University, he returned to Boot's Landscaping and Maintenance in 2000 as a foreman.

Wanting to further himself, Kampen entered the University of Guelph to earn a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with a focus on horticulture and business. He received a scholarship from Landscape Ontario.

Upon completion of his degree, he returned to Boot's once again, this time as maintenance supervisor with the responsibility of overseeing the company's large grounds management operations.

"I love the industry, and the opportunity to work outside. The variety of challenges that the job presents and the satisfaction of a job well done are two aspects of the job that I love. With our industry, the results are very visual and therefore the rewards are immediate."

Kampen is a strong believer in professionalism and presenting a professional image to the client. "I think education, which can take many forms, is extremely important and more necessary than ever to take our industry to another level. I would encourage people to make use of the many opportunities that are available in order to enhance their knowledge. Don't be too eager to start your own business. Take the time to get an education, learn as an employee from a successful employer, and gain valuable hands-on experience.

Kampen and his wife Toni have been married for 15 years. They have five children, ranging in ages from six months to 10 years.