

AGCanada

Farm Business Communications

One of Canada's top forage seed and turfgrass companies is poised to become part of the world's biggest.

The Ontario-based Pickseed Companies Group, with operations across Canada and in Oregon, will be formally acquired Friday by Danish grass and clover seed firm DLF-Trifolium for an undisclosed sum.

Pickseed's owners Tom and Martin Pick, sons of company founder Otto Pick, signed a sale agreement with DLF last month for the company and all its operations across North America, which today represent about US\$100 million in annual sales.

"We felt that it was important to sell to an entity that would have a good cultural fit with Pickseed. We are confident that DLF-Trifolium as a dedicated turfgrass and forage crop seed company will be able to carry forward and develop the Pickseed business and legacy," the Pick brothers said in a release.

DLF CEO Truels Damsgaard in July described the Pickseed deal as "a major strategic step forward" for his company.

"Pickseed is a true turfgrass and forage crop seeds company, and it has a strong organization with dedicated employees," he said. "We have a common understanding of the products and everything entailed in this segment of the seeds industry."

DLF, Damsgaard said, is "looking forward to developing the Pickseed business in North America, and to further develop a strong platform to promote DLF-Trifolium forage products in Canada, and to bring the Pickseed product potential through the DLF-Trifolium global network."

Pickseed started in 1947 as Otto Pick Agricultural Service, focused on direct sales of improved forage seed to southern Ontario livestock producers, based on the then-relatively-new concept of "permanent pasture."

Otto Pick's sons and his wife Marie took over the business following his death in 1959, expanding into turfgrass products and expanding both west and east with a Manitoba seed production unit, a processing plant in Winnipeg and a distribution site at St-Hyacinthe, Que.

The company later expanded into the U.S. in the 1970s through Oregon-based Pickseed West, and took over one of Canada's biggest forage and turfgrass seed businesses, the seed division of Maple Leaf Mills, in 1981.

Based at Lindsay, about 40 km west of Peterborough, starting in 1993, Pickseed's acquisitions since then have included Oregon-based Roberts Seed Co.; Agribiotech Canada; Land o' Lakes' forage and turf arm Seed Research of Oregon; and, in 2008, the Nipawin, Sask. forage seed business of Regina's FarmPure Seeds.

Operating under the Pickseed, Mapleseed, Seed Research of Oregon and TurfOne brand names, the company now has facilities at Lindsay, Winnipeg, St-Hyacinthe, Nipawin, Edmonton, Dawson Creek and Abbotsford, B.C., and in the U.S. at Corvallis and Tangent, Ore.

Pickseed's buyer, which bills itself as the world's biggest producer of grass and clover seed, started as a Danish farmers' seed co-operative in 1906. That co-operative, DLF AmbA, still owns 95 per cent of DLF-Trifolium.

DLF now operates subsidiaries in Denmark, the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Holland, France, the Czech Republic and New Zealand and books sales of over US\$350 million per year, holding a worldwide market share of about 20 per cent in the grass and cool-season clover business. — *AGCanada.com Network*

Related stories:

[World Cup pitches to feature Man. turfgrass seed](#), June 3, 2010

[Court date set for FarmPure Seeds deal](#), Oct. 8, 2008