

Preventing Spills

A little effort to prevent spills will make a big difference in avoiding downtime for cleanup or machine repair. Keep these tips in mind:

Make sure colors are properly mixed — This ensures that the product flows smoothly and that there is no residue in the bottom of the tote. A homogenous blend of colorant allows the product to flow more uniformly and prevents clogging of the machine's filters and pipes. This will mean more production time and more profitability.

Use field support to replace worn parts — Since spills can occur simply due to wear and tear on the machine, allow time for a yearly audit with the Colorbiotics tech service team. They will look over the equipment and replace any worn parts that may cause leaks.

Steps to take in case of spills — If a spill occurs, the first step is to identify the hazard and the size of the spill. If the spill is small (generally less than a gallon), then immediately contain the spilled materials. Add absorbent material (dust, sand, etc.), and scoop it up and dispose of it according to regulations.

If the spill is larger than a gallon, secure the area, and if needed, call an authorized CHEMTREC contractor.



Although colorant spills happen infrequently, transport personnel should be well-trained and know what steps to take when a spill does occur. For larger spills, Colorbiotics customers should contact the CHEMTREC emergency response team.

Safety Steps in Spills

When spills happen

The potential for spills exists throughout the colorizing process — from handling raw material, to packaging finished goods to transporting materials. Colorbiotics[™] designs its colorants and equipment to minimize both the possibility and the impact of spills. While the risk is minimal, operators need to know what to do if spills occur so they can minimize the environmental impact and the potential of lost revenue to the mulching operation.

CHEMTREC

CHEMTREC is a 24-hour-a-day emergency response team that Colorbiotics retains for its customers as a value-added service. CHEMTREC is linked to the largest network of chemical and hazardous material experts in the world, including public emergency services and private contractors. Their toll-free number, 1-800-262-8800, is listed on all materials provided by Colorbiotics.

CHEMTREC has product information for the entire line of Colorbiotics colorants and knows how to manage spills in the field or on the road. They will also ask questions to help determine if the operator or CHEMTREC needs to clean up the spill.

Why risk downtime?

The good news about spills is that they are largely preventable, and if they do happen, there is a strong network to help contain and clean up the spill. Because the end use of colorants is for landscaping materials, Colorbiotics colorants are non-toxic, non-hazardous, non-reactive and non-flammable. They are environmentally friendly and safe for plants and animals. While the risk is very minimal, it is still important to have a plan to manage spills so downtime and revenue loss are minimized.



Dear Colorbiotics Customer:

The foundation of the Colorbiotics operational philosophy is what we call The Total Solutions Approach — a principle built on customer commitment and constant innovation. It's why customers around the world are continuously turning to us for solutions that help make them more efficient, more effective and more profitable.

Each Colorbiotics product originates in a state-of-the-art laboratory with the latest equipment and a diverse research staff. Behind the scenes is the industry's only ISO 9001 focused mulch colorant facility. The result is a product of the highest quality so you can enjoy the highest performance and realize the greatest profitability.

Our full line of coloring systems begin with a simple, low-cost colorant pump for the entry level customer and range to a high-quality, state-of-the-art system with the capacity to produce up to 400 yards of colored mulch per hour. To complement the diversity and quality of Colorbiotics coloring systems, our qualified technical service experts will help set up and calibrate your system for optimal performance. Should service ever become necessary, our highly skilled and knowledgeable customer support team will be there, ready to respond as quickly as possible to get you up and running again with minimal downtime.

While working hard to serve you in the field, we are also passionate about the quality of our own internal process. We analyze all raw materials prior to manufacturing, and each finished product is again inspected prior to packaging. Our quality control records are then given stringent quarterly external audits.

In this issue of INSIGHT, I would like to direct your attention to the articles that focus on production tips to achieve optimal color, and the overview of how to select the colorant system that best fits your needs. In addition, I hope you will find the marketing tips information beneficial.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Lester". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Brent Lester
Chief Operating Officer

Colorbiotics Introduces Starburst Colorant for Mulch

*Product technology delivers
outstanding vibrancy and
color protection*

Colorbiotics has brought a new level of visual impact and beauty that end-users demand to the market with the introduction of Starburst™ mulch colorant.

Starburst produces an undeniable intensity because of its exclusive modular technology, which gives the colorant more vibrancy at the point of application. This innovation provides uniform coverage, superior adhesion and color protection for maximum weatherability.

In fact, Starburst color-enhanced mulch will typically maintain its color throughout an entire season. Once the colors dry, they are on the mulch permanently and will not wash off or leach into the soil.

Like all Colorbiotics mulch colorants, Starburst is produced under strict ISO 9001 standards to ensure consistent quality.

Like all Colorbiotics mulch colorants, Starburst provides value by offering the highest quality in the industry, beginning with the raw materials. All Colorbiotics products are vibrant in color and produced under strict International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9001 standards batch after batch. Colorbiotics is the first and only focused mulch colorants supplier to follow these stringent production guidelines. Under these quality control standards, Colorbiotics tests for consistent hue, strength and opacity. Starburst is also specially formulated to be nontoxic to plants and animals.

Colorbiotics is constantly working with customers and end-users to deliver a desired palette and offer innovative landscape design options. Starburst is available in red, black, gold and brown colors that are suited to all regional preferences.



The modular technology, an exclusive to the newly introduced Starburst mulch colorant, gives it vibrancy at the point of application while providing more uniform coverage, superior adhesion and maximum weatherability.



OPERATIONAL TIPS

Quality Control — *A Colorbiotics collaborative team effort*

Quality can often mean different things to different people — and quality expectations will often vary based on personal views of the importance or relevance of a product or service. Not the case for Colorbiotics, however. Our definition of quality will never vary.

The disciplines we follow to ensure that we consistently exceed customer expectations are paramount to our success. The quality of the products we offer our customers is the result of a collaborative effort among several internal divisions, all working in concert to achieve a critical company goal — to provide innovative products and imaginative solutions that enhance our customers' business. "The Colorbiotics research, production, sales and service team has more than 25 years of experience in the landscape coating industry," says Brent Lester, chief operating officer of Colorbiotics. "Their knowledge and expertise are responsible for the introduction of ground-breaking products that have revolutionized the industry, a track record of which we are extremely proud."

Research

Our team of researchers is constantly searching for the next great innovation. It may evolve from a newly discovered technology, or perhaps by re-engineering an existing one. Perhaps it may originate in the natural world, just waiting for our researchers to discover. Or maybe, it's simply a matter of getting the right people to communicate with each other. Regardless, the Colorbiotics research team is committed to finding it.



Our team of researchers is passionate in their pursuit of the next colorant innovation, and all Colorbiotics products are developed and produced under strict ISO 9001 standards.

Our production process

The drive to discover has also led us to establish the highest standards in our production process. All our products are developed and manufactured under strict ISO 9001 standards. Colorbiotics is the first and only focused mulch colorant supplier whose production process adheres to such quality control.

Our standards begin well before the final product is produced with a thorough evaluation of all the components, an adherence to stringent inspections and continuous testing of the raw materials that we receive from our suppliers.

"We analyze our raw materials prior to manufacturing and inspect all finished products prior to packaging," says Todd Schnathorst, New Product Development Manager for Colorbiotics. "Our quality control records are then given stringent quarterly external audits. All this ensures every product that leaves our doors is of the highest quality."

Customer support

To complement the power of the Colorbiotics coloring system, our qualified technical service experts will help you set up and calibrate your system and are always available to answer your questions. They will have you up and running — and profiting — in no time.

Not only does Colorbiotics offer you the best in mulch coloring technology, we back it up with the most reliable and accessible service team in the industry. You can always count on the Colorbiotics team to help you develop solutions specific to your business.

How to Choose the Right Colorant Equipment

Choosing the right colorant equipment starts with understanding what's available in the market, and how that fits your situation.

Stand-alone systems are self-contained and used by operators who produce a top-quality product at the lowest cost. These machines generally use less water and colorant.

Colorant injection systems can minimize your initial investment compared to a stand-alone system; however, they typically increase the costs to produce high-quality colored mulch.

Colorbiotics Equipment

Colorbiotics provides several models of colorant equipment.

Sahara X Series

The Sahara® X Series delivers high-quality colored mulch and uses dramatically less water and colorant than other colorant equipment. This is the only system with the ability to immediately bag and ship product.

Second Harvester® Series

The Second Harvester® Series is a multi-stage mixing system that creates an appealing, cost-effective product.

Infusion™

The Infusion™ is a fast and effective entry-level product.

Factoring in water use

The optimal water ratio is important when coloring mulch. Too much water weighs down the mulch and creates a diluted product, while using too little water provides inadequate coverage.

Among Colorbiotics equipment, the Sahara uses less water than any other coloring system on the market today. Using a minimal amount of water ensures the highest quality colored mulch while reducing drying time and freight costs.

The Sahara system also produces brighter colors that retain their vibrancy for a longer period of time.



A review of your specific company needs is helpful in selecting the right colorant system. The Sahara X system (pictured) is the most water-efficient machine on the market.

Deciding what's right for you

Each customer needs to ask how they want colorizing to fit into their current process and what quality of mulch they want to produce. They also need to consider what kind of service they will get after the sale. You may base your decision on your comfort level with the people you're buying it from, and how the equipment will be serviced.

Colorbiotics works with its customers on a needs assessment. This tool helps the customer define what they want to do, what product they want to make, whether they want to bag the product, what market they are in, and what their goals are. In some cases, Colorbiotics will design and install a customized system to meet specific criteria.

Whatever equipment a customer needs, Colorbiotics is there to help them make the right decision and provide ongoing service after the sale.

INSIGHT

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How to Achieve Optimal Color

Achieving the right color mulch is easy: achieving the right shade is a little harder. Producing mulch that is durable, consistent, weather-resistant — and in the shade your customers expect — is the optimal challenge.

How does an operator achieve optimal color? Three factors — water settings, color pump settings and the machine's output speed — make a big difference.

Water settings matter because water is the catalyst that brings colors to life. Generally, only a minimal amount of water is needed. If too much water is added, the color becomes diluted.

Pump settings refer to the amount of color going through the machine, and should be set so that color is neither over- or under-applied. Under-colored mulch will not be marketable, while over-coloring adds to the overall expense and is less efficient.

Output speed should be set in line with what the machine is mechanically suited to produce. Knowing the output of the machine and checking it regularly can help make sure production is on track.

Before use, mix the colorant to proper specifications to ensure a consistent color. After use, completely empty the coloring machine and flush the color pumps and spray tips with water.

Variables that affect color include:

- **Grind size:** Grind size consistency is key to producing a high-quality finished product.
- **Raw material:** The age and species of raw material will affect the end product. As wood ages it decomposes naturally and will darken in appearance, affecting how the colorant will react to the mulch fiber. Different wood species will also affect product quality, especially when combining hard wood and soft wood.
- **Coloring system:** The coloring system has a direct impact on the total cost and quality of the end product.
- **Colorant:** The quality of the colorant will directly impact the value of the end product.
- **Water:** The amount of water needed will vary depending on the coloring system you choose. Using less water will produce a better-quality, low-cost product.
- **Weather:** Weather will affect the moisture content level of the raw material and the amount of water needed during the coloring process.

Support

While there are many variables affecting optimal color, one thing is constant: the level of support you receive from Colorbiotics. Call 888.663.6980 for any questions or concerns you might have.

Additionally, our technical services team is unique in the industry and provides troubleshooting in unusual circumstances. Whatever your situation, Colorbiotics is there to help you achieve the optimal color you need.



At Colorbiotics, our highly qualified team of research professionals is constantly working to develop new and innovative mulch colorant of exceptional quality. It's this relentless passion for perfection and unparalleled service that propelled Colorbiotics to become the global leader in landscape coatings technology. Colorbiotics is the only landscape colorant supplier whose production process adheres to ISO 9001 certification standards and 100 percent of our product is manufactured on site.



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Marketing Tips to Grow Your Business

Understanding customer needs and expectations

You're confident your company can provide the level of service your customers expect. You're certain that the products you offer are of exceptional quality. Your workforce is competent, professional and imaginative. You feel confident that the time is right for your business to grow. But how can you make that happen?

Begin by recognizing that there will be a limited number of people who actually "need" your products and services. Identify exactly who they are. Then you will be able to develop a strategy and effective communications to reach them in the most efficient manner.

***"Price is what you pay.
Value is what you get."***

- Billionaire Warren Buffet

Consider the following marketing and promotional ideas to help your business grow:

Create the perception of value

If you neglect to communicate the true value of your products and services, you've failed to provide your customers with validation to continue doing business with your company. When customers perceive value, price is often times irrelevant. Take a bag of colored mulch as an example. Most likely, the colored mulch will cost more. But a prominently displayed value proposition on the bag (i.e., "will not fade compared to standard mulch products") provides the customer with the necessary rationale to purchase the more expensive product.

The biggest mistake companies make when marketing their products and services is to assume that their value is inherently understood. As the producer and supplier, you may know your product is better, but the features and benefits need to be communicated to the customer. Don't be shy about blowing your own horn. If you don't, be assured that your competitors will.

Look to your colorant supplier for assistance in developing communications materials and other tactics to help set your company apart from competitors, and demonstrate the value of the products and services you offer.

Up-selling

If you think of your main business as helping customers, the concept of up-selling is easy. Your sales force should be adept at recognizing the challenges facing your customers, and what they consider to be problems within their operation. Recommending new products or suggesting additional services — or a combination thereof — may often accomplish helping them identify solutions to their challenges.

It is likely that your customers are in need of more than a single solution. By asking the right questions and effective listening, your frontline people will become adept at formulating strategies to expand the offerings. Grouping together several different products and services can give customers an advanced package that goes much further toward creating more satisfying solutions.

Your facility, their impression

Don't underestimate the impact and importance of creating a good first impression. The general condition of your facility — things like signage, aesthetics, landscaping, staff appearance and condition of equipment — all have a profound impact on how customers view your organization. After all, we are in the beautification business ... shouldn't your facility be a reflection of the services you provide?



