



Brussels, January 31, 2008

The “European Synthetic Turf Organisation” is organising a first Conference

Football Turf Today and Tomorrow

ESTO - the recently established “European Synthetic Turf Organisation” - will organise its first conference in Nice (France) on March 6 and 7. The Founding Members* and the new Associate Members* will come together to review the plans that ESTO has developed for the future and share the common objectives that this industry wants to achieve.

For the first time, the newly invited “Associate Members”, who are all active in the value chain of Synthetic Turf, will be given the opportunity to participate in the work that ESTO is planning to implement. The main objectives are related to the quality of turf, the reliability of the installations and to reaching trust and confidence with a positive image for quality. As ESTO’s Chairman, Arnoud Fiolet says: “Ensuring quality Turf - is ESTO’s motto! It is a great challenge - keeping in mind that there is no greater fraud than a promise not kept.”

In the past, due to the lack of experience, short term commercial benefits and fierce competition chances have been taken with quality. Some of the promises were not delivered and consequently the image has been affected. The first tangible signal in the direction of change is the “code of conduct” that all the full members have signed. The associate members will be invited to accept the same conditions. ESTO has established minimum criteria that all players will have to fulfil. An overall absolute warranty of five years, wherever the field is installed in Europe, a proper warranty commitment, general technical guidelines, etc.

ESTO imposes strict conditions to qualify for membership. This is one of the elements needed to gradually gain the confidence in the market. Customers and end-users will understand that the code of conduct is guaranteed and that Quality Turf is ensured! Members in this quality chain not respecting the original commitments may be excluded. A sophisticated procedure with the contribution of an ombudsman has been developed to implement in a fair and loyal manner the moral obligation to behave responsibly in the market.

Some of the subjects that will be covered and discussed at the conference :

- The latest developments in biomechanics
- Update on the infill situation
- FIFA requirements
- Progress on Maintenance and installation techniques

Synthetic Turf is on the move for a better future in sports!

* **Full membership** of ESTO is open to any producer of yarn for synthetic turf or of the tufted surfaces forming the turf, having production facilities in Europe, subject to requirements on quality and financial standing. Other actors in the synthetic turf value chain, eg. contractors, installers, architects & consultants, suppliers, maintenance companies and specialty machinery manufacturers may under specific conditions qualify for **Associate membership**.

Notes to Editors

1. Synthetic turf in Europe is a € 1 billion+ business, with dynamic growth rates. Together with the USA, Europe is the global leader in this activity. ESTO represents about 85% of the European Synthetic Turf market.



2. The founding members of ESTO are:
Bonar Yarns, Desso Sports Systems, Domo Sports & Leisure Grass, Edel Grass, FieldTurf Tarkett, Greenfields, Lano Sports, Limonta Sport, Mondo Tufting, Poligras, Polytan, Saltex, Ten Cate & Tessiture Pietro Radici & TigerTurf.
3. ESTO has been formed as a sector group within EATP, the European Association for Textile Polyolefins, a respected and influential industry association in Brussels. It follows EATP's strict rules of conduct on competition policy compliance.

4. The offices of ESTO are at:

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