



Scotts® Introduces 50% Slow Release Nitrogen Lawn Fertilizer for all Floridians to Help Protect Local Waterways

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Statewide product rollout is met with praise from prominent environmental leaders in Florida; Company will expand partnerships for environmental innovations with key groups across the state.

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., Oct. 19, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Recognizing the importance of protecting the environment, particularly protecting Florida's water resources, Scotts today announced it has introduced new 50 percent slow-release nitrogen lawn food products throughout the entire state of Florida.

This unique-to-Florida lawn fertilizer will help consumers play a role in protecting the state's critical water resources. In properly caring for the lawns around their homes, these spaces can act as barriers to counteract the many sources of urban nutrient runoff. The product innovation builds on Scotts' nationwide phosphorus-free lawn maintenance fertilizer initiative completed in 2013 as well as a multi-year *Smarter Solutions for Cleaner Waterways* initiative that began in 2014 and culminates this year.

"As leaders in lawn and garden, we have an on-going commitment to innovation that helps gardeners nurture plant life in ways that work in harmony with the world around them," said Jim Hagedorn, Chairman and CEO of parent company ScottsMiracle-Gro, who is a resident of Florida. "Florida's water bodies make our state a truly amazing place and we view it as our responsibility to help Floridians be confident that they are doing their part to protect our most valuable natural resources. We began a three-year program in 2014 that dedicated support for groups conducting research, restoration and greenspace projects around many of the state's most sensitive water bodies and will expand this work with environmental leaders across the state beyond 2016."

More than five years ago, Scotts made the groundbreaking announcement that it would remove phosphorus from all its lawn maintenance products nationwide in order to improve the environmental impact of its lawn care products. This innovation led to a 10,000 ton reduction in phosphorus use nationwide, leading to an approximate 500 ton reduction annually in Florida. The introduction of 50 percent slow-release nitrogen products to the entire state of Florida signals a new milestone in the Company's national "Water Positive Landscapes" initiative aimed at protecting waterways by providing homeowners with actionable ways to responsibly use water when working in their lawns and gardens.

"Water quality remains a concern throughout Florida as algae blooms increasingly threaten the health of Florida's water bodies," said Josh Peoples, Vice President and General Manager of Scotts brand products. "We have taken this step to continue our pursuit to provide consumers the best products for their lawns so that they can that positively impact the environment around them."

"We have watched ScottsMiracle-Gro prove they are committed to being part of the solution in restoring water bodies like the Everglades by removing phosphorus from their products years ago and, now, in taking another important step to help residents across Florida improve their nitrogen footprint when working in their own yards. The Everglades Foundation applauds Scotts' ongoing efforts to implement nutrient solutions in our state," said Eric Eikenberg, CEO of the Everglades Foundation.

Benefitting Florida's Unique Environment

This will be the first 50 percent slow release nitrogen product that uses Scotts' patented All-In-One Particle® technology for even feeding across lawns. When nutrients, such as nitrogen, are slowly released over an extended period of time, it enables lawns to stay consistently healthy and properly serve as a barrier to runoff particularly during heavy rains, such as the ones that occur during Florida's summers.

More than \$8 million and five years were invested into the research necessary to develop a reliable slow release nitrogen technology, uniquely designed with Florida's climate, sandy soil composition and year-round gardening in mind.

"There is simply no question about whether or not the level of nutrients, particularly phosphorus and nitrogen, in our waterways is contributing to the problems we are seeing in the Indian River Lagoon and other water bodies," said Dr. Edith "Edie" Widder, Founder of the Ocean Research and Conservation Association (ORCA). "Providing Floridians with a means for reducing their environmental footprint will go a long way to restoring the health of these delicate and precious ecosystems."

Furthering the Commitment to Innovation and Environmental Stewardship

In June, ScottsMiracle-Gro announced a nationwide Water Positive Landscapes initiative, which is equipping homeowners with educational and actionable resources to help them use water responsibly in their lawns and gardens. The initiative is also focusing on product innovation, such as 50 percent slow release nitrogen, and continued research on the intersection between lawn care and gardening and water stewardship.

This latest water protection initiative follows the Company's "Florida Smarter Solutions for Cleaner Waterways" initiative that

sponsored in-state water quality research, habitat restoration, consumer education and green infrastructure improvements. ScottsMiracle-Gro funded an independent research project by the Ocean Research & Conservation Association to determine the sources of pollution in the Indian River Lagoon. The results of this research will help create solutions to improve the lagoon's water and wildlife, and also create a model that can be replicated for other polluted waterways.

Through its partnership with Tampa Bay Watch, more than 20 acres of salt marsh plants will be restored in Tampa Bay. Grants to community gardens, farms and greenspaces throughout Florida have protected more than 47,600 square feet of land.

"As a partner in the ScottsMiracle-Gro 'Florida Smarter Solutions for Cleaner Waterways' initiative and a participant in the 'Water Positive National Partner Network', we have seen, first-hand, their willingness to listen to stakeholders and work with nontraditional allies to identify solutions," said Peter Clark, President of Tampa Bay Watch. "Scotts is being responsive to Florida's water quality issues as proven by their significant investment in research and restoration projects throughout the state."

About ScottsMiracle-Gro

The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company is passionate about helping people of all ages express themselves on their own piece of the Earth. With approximately \$3 billion in sales, the Company is the world's largest marketer of branded consumer products for lawn and garden care. The Company's brands are the most recognized in the industry. In 2016, the Company ranked in Forbes 100 Most Reputable Companies in America for the second year in a row. To learn more about the Company and our initiatives, visit us at www.scottsmiraclegro.com

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The logo for Scotts Miracle-Gro, featuring the word "Scotts" in a green, serif font, "Miracle" in a smaller, green, sans-serif font, and "Gro" in a larger, bold, black, sans-serif font.

Scotts Miracle-Gro Company