



Ortho Brand Announces Plan to Eliminate Neonics from All its Outdoor Products

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Partnership with the Pollinator Stewardship Council to Focus on Consumer Education

MARYSVILLE, Ohio, April 12, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Ortho, the nation's leading brand of insect control products for lawn and garden use, said today it would immediately begin to transition away from the use of neonicotinoid-based pesticides for outdoor use and announced a new partnership with the Pollinator Stewardship Council to help educate homeowners on the safe and appropriate use of pesticides.

Earlier this spring, Ortho expanded its selection of non-neonic based garden solutions. Building on this process, the brand will eliminate the use of neonic active ingredients Imidacloprid, Clothianidin and Dinotefuran by 2017.

"This decision comes after careful consideration regarding the range of possible threats to honey bees and other pollinators," said Tim Martin, general manager of the Ortho brand. "While agencies in the United States are still evaluating the overall impact of neonics on pollinator populations, it's time for Ortho to move on. As the category leader, it is our responsibility to provide consumers with effective solutions that they know are safe for their family and the environment when used as directed. We encourage other companies and brands in the consumer pest control category to follow our lead."

To further help homeowners, Ortho and its parent company, ScottsMiracle-Gro, announced a multi-year partnership with the Pollinator Stewardship Council, one of the nation's leading pollinator advocacy organizations and supporter of more than 550 beekeepers throughout the United States. The Company has previously collaborated with the Council to promote pollinator habitat, and the expanded partnership will develop homeowner education related to the responsible use of pesticides where pollinators can be found. That effort will use web, social media and other platforms to reach consumers. In January, ScottsMiracle-Gro also announced the Pollinator Promise, a program that will result in the creation of 75 pollinator gardens in cities throughout the U.S. this year. The program is part of the company's highly recognized GRO1000 Initiative, which has resulted in the creation of 790 community gardens thus far.

"We applaud the Ortho brand and ScottsMiracle-Gro for the steps that they're taking to protect pollinators," said Michele Colopy, program director of the Pollinator Stewardship Council. "Bees and butterflies are essential to our ecosystem and are increasingly facing a struggle to survive. We know gardeners value the importance of pollinators and we look forward to developing programs that help accomplish our shared goal to protect them. We join Ortho in asking other consumer pest control brands to also transition away from the use of neonics."

In addition to these initiatives, ScottsMiracle-Gro said it would work with the Pollinator Stewardship Council and other partners to encourage government agencies to allow the use of label language that makes the purchase of non-neonic pesticides more apparent for homeowners.

"Ortho is taking this important action on its products, yet, consumers will still not know which products contain neonics and which do not simply by reading the product label. We know straight-forward, easily understood product labels help consumers make the best choices to protect both their plants as well as honey bees and native pollinators," Ms. Colopy continued. "Regulators need to allow the images on labels to be consistent with typical, recognizable consumer imagery to help the consumer make intuitive choices to achieve these goals. We look forward to joining with ScottsMiracle-Gro in the effort to help consumers better distinguish what products are neonic-free."

About ScottsMiracle-Gro

With approximately \$3 billion in worldwide sales, The Scotts Miracle-Gro 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 the U.S., the Company's Scotts®, Miracle-Gro® and Ortho® brands are market-leading in their categories, as is the consumer Roundup® brand, which is exclusively marketed near worldwide by Scotts and owned by Monsanto. In Europe, the Company's brands include Weedol®, Pathclear®, Evergreen®, Levington®, Miracle-Gro®, KB®, Fertiligène® and Substral®. In 2016, the Company ranked on Forbes 100 Most Reputable Companies in America. For additional information, visit us at www.scottsmiraclegro.com.

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