

National Coalition for Pesticide-Free Lawns



Conference Call Notes

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Thanks to everyone who participated!

PARTICIPANTS

Ann Mason, FACT, FL
Caroline Kennedy, Defenders of Wildlife, Natl
Charlotte Wells, Texans for Alts to Ps, TX
Ginger Souders-Mason, PFZ, CA
Jane Nogaki, New Jersey Federation, NJ
John Kepner, Beyond Pesticides, Natl

Kim Stoner, CT NOFA, CT
Patti Wood, Grassroots Enviro Ed, NY
Philip Dickey, Washington Toxics Cltn, WA
Rachel Rosenberg, Safer Pest Control Project, IL
Shawnee Hoover, Beyond Pesticides, Natl
Tess Karwoski, Michigan Enviro Council, MI

MATERIALS STANCE

The Coalition agreed that **biosolids** in fertilizer are not tolerated, no question.

On **natural "weed and feed"** corn gluten product,

- The coalition agreed that corn gluten products, provided they're not mixed with anything toxic or fast release, are consistent with our values & pesticide-free mantra.
- Question is do support reference to corn gluten products mixed with other additives as a "non-toxic weed and feed" or find a different way to refer to the product? Several groups and allies are already using the "weed and feed" analogy. Some feel the "weed and feed" term draws in the lay person and could move more toward natural products, others feel strongly that the reference could send a blurry message, confuse the public when purchasing products, encourage over-fertilization (not realizing that they're fertilizing with nitrogen), and that since it's not an actual herbicide + fertilizer then technically it's an incorrect analogy.

REVIEW OF PRESS CONFERENCE – PRESS RECEIVED:

(Congrats to everyone who managed to do a local press release and get a hit!)

The Press of Atlantic City – **NJ**
Statesman Journal – Salem, **OR**
The Register-Guard – Eugene, **OR**
The Register-Guard – LINKED as Related Story in
Canadian Press
Herald Tribune - Sarasota, **FL** (online)
Danbury News Times - **CT**
Freelance Journalist, state journal, **WI**
Michigan Radio - **MI**
Columbian Missourian – Working on story. **MO**
Newhouse News Service – **National**

Federal News Service – **National**
Society of Environmental Journalists – great
Tipsheet – **National**
Lawn & Landscape Magazine – **National**
(online; June in Print)
Pesticide Tx Chem News (trade mag) –
National
Chemical Week - **National**
E Magazine - **National**
Call & interviews from CBS Evening News
Montgomery Advertiser – **AL**

Additional on Conf Call

Grounds Maintenance Magazine, Landscape Trades, Natural Garden Radio, Midwest Gardner

RETAILER STATUS

Both have responded with promises to follow up, but we're currently confined to the PR division. Lowe's called and is basically arguing with us. Next step is a letter with a specific list of demands. Confronting local store managers with request for natural products is encouraged on behalf of local groups or individuals not on behalf of Coalition as it could muddle any negotiations with headquarters.

NATURAL LAWN PRODUCT (NLP) STRATEGY TEAM FORMED

This group will provide advice and guidance in forming the Coalition's strategy and negotiations with retailers. This group will report back to the steering committee at large.

Caroline-Defenders of Wildlife, Tess-Michigan Enviro Council, Patti-Grassroots Enviro Education, Nina Powers OR Ann Mason-FACT, Philip-Washington Toxics, Rachel-Safer Pest Control Project
EXPERTS: Steven Zien, CA, Edward von Bleichert, CO, Chip Osborne, MA

COALITION STATUS

AS OF 4/28/05: 135 sign-ons to the Declaration. Appears that all signers also choose to join the coalition.

Coalition agreed that it would be good to have a set monthly time/day for conf calls. Also agreed that the current structure of decision-making is adequate and no additional process is needed at this time. Agreed that inactive members of the steering committee should be asked to join the greater coalition to free up room for suggestions of other active steering members.

AROUND THE COUNTRY UPDATES

Westchester, NY (Patti): Pesticide-Free Day, May 7, 2005 by county pest management committee. Advertising, why not to use p's on lawn. This year county exec doing a phone message about haz drop off day/p-free day. Requesting papers do full page PSAs. Also, April issue front page of *Landscaper*, *The Voice Of The Industry* features GHLP & Westchester program. GHLP's landscaper how-to video really turned things around – great for getting landscapers to see possibilities.

New Jersey (Jane): State press release highlighted regional activities, educational campaigns & p-free lawns and subsequent day featured Chatham p-free park. Beyond getting press out of it, the release helped getting the buzz going around the state.

Marin, CA (Ginger): GHLP video being used in Calif going to landscape companies one by one.

Michigan (Tess): Meeting with two large landscaper orgs (could use video!) about new p-free lawn campaign. Discussing why they should be considering alternatives. Presenting in mid-May. 1 hour. Building a small coalition, also mtg with mi Dept of Ag & legislators.

Connecticut (Kim): NOFA is having a one-day training course in August on organic lawn care.

** IDEAS RAISED ON CALL & PREVIOUSLY ** (“bike-racked”)

- PANNA also has an Int'l P-Free Day. We should coordinate and see how to ramp up awareness.
- We should approach other retailers potentially more receptive and who'll hit our target audience better like Whole Foods and Wild Oats
- Can we adopt NOFA's Organic Land Care Standards? <http://www.organiclandcare.net/publications/>
- Professional lawn p-free PSAs can be available for all to distribute to local stations.
- Next Action: Working with The National Garden in Washington DC
www.scotts.com/index.cfm/event/Article.Detail/documentId/5ad692beea87ce09dad562e7f591abde