

Beyond Pesticides, Biological Urban Gardening Services, Californians for Pesticide Reform, Casco Baykeeper, Clean New York, Emerald Coastkeeper, For A Better Bronx, Friends of Casco Bay, Friends of the Earth, Galveston Baykeeper, Grassroots Environmental Education, Greenpeace, Healthy Lawn Team, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, Maryland Pesticide Network, New Jersey Environmental Federation, Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, Oregon Toxics Alliance, Pesticide Action Network North America, Pesticide Watch, Pesticide-Free Zone, Project Ladybug, SafeLawns.org, Safer Pest Control Project, San Francisco Baykeeper, Sassafras Riverkeeper, Toxics Action Center, Watershed Partnership, Inc.

February 16, 2010

Tim Brosnan
Executive Vice President, Business
Major League Baseball
75 Ninth Avenue, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10011 USA

Dear Mr. Brosnan:

We, the undersigned representatives of environmental and public health organizations across North America, are concerned by news of your new affiliation with the Scotts Company. Rather than first going public with our concerns, we are writing to ask that you reconsider your partnership with Scotts — and a lawn care program that undermines sound environmental principles and puts the public's health at risk. Scotts' chemical-intensive lawn care program and your alliance with the company send the wrong message to homeowners and fans of Major League Baseball — that toxic chemicals are necessary to have a beautiful green lawn. In this critical period of history when we are shifting to "green" practices around the home and in our communities, Major League Baseball can and should be an environmental leader, rather than advancing toxic products with well documented deleterious health and environmental impacts.

Major League Baseball should set a higher environmental standard. Rather than embrace a chemical approach, Major League Baseball should adopt and publicize proven organic turf management practices that build soil health and eliminate toxic runoff into local waterways, eliminate harmful residues and drift from treated areas, and adopt cultural practices that reduce water use and conserve resources. If you must continue your partnership with Scotts, we ask that you work with them to incorporate their products that would be appropriate in a defined organic system.

We believe the current partnership with the Scotts Company is wrong for the following reasons:

- 1. The toxic chemicals being promoted are not needed for a beautiful lawn.** The Scotts approach to turf management is dependent on chemical products it sells. Its 4-step program converts the home lawn to chemical dependency, including heavy reliance on hazardous herbicides, insecticides and synthetic fertilizers. However, lawns are best managed successfully without a reliance on these toxic chemicals with a program that focuses on cultural practices that address soil health, aeration, mowing height, proper organic fertilization, watering techniques, and appropriate grass varieties.
- 2. Major League Ballparks are currently different from home lawns and the same approach is not appropriate.** While homeowners should select grass seed based on soil, light and local climatic

conditions, ballparks choose seed selected for its ability to withstand high amounts of pesticide and fertilizer applications and frequent (often daily) care. Homeowners should focus on healthy soil to achieve a healthy lawn, whereas ballparks often contain artificial soil and drainage pipes below the field. In the home environment, mowing, watering and fertilizer inputs should be minimized as much as possible. This is especially true in an era when as much as a third of the nation may be under water restrictions at various times of year.

3. **Pesticides are hazardous.** Below ground, pesticides harm the microorganisms, beneficial insects and earthworms that are essential to maintaining healthy soil, and therefore, healthy turf. Pesticides also harm water bodies and groundwater. Above ground, pesticides harm all forms of life. The risks are higher when products containing pesticides are applied by unlicensed applicators.
4. **Synthetic fertilizers are hazardous.** Synthetic fertilizers also harm beneficial organisms in the soil and lead to undesirable conditions that restrict water and air movement in the soil. High nitrogen fertilizers can disrupt the nutrient balance, accelerate turf growth, increase the need for mowing and contribute to thatch buildup. These fertilizers are also prone to leaching and runoff, which contaminates water above and below ground.
5. **Children are especially vulnerable to adverse effects from pesticides.** Because the home lawn is often the play space for children, and children are among the most vulnerable to toxic chemical exposure, chemical-intensive lawn management should be replaced with organic approaches. Exposure occurs as a result of direct contact with the treated law areas, chemical drift off the treated areas, and tracking and drifting inside of homes, which leaves residues on fabrics and surfaces. Scientific studies show that children face elevated rates of diseases associated with pesticide exposure and pesticides are linked to cancer, endocrine system disruption, neurological and immune system effects, asthma and respiratory effects, and behavioral and learning effects.

At a time when homeowners and communities across the country are looking at ways to adopt practices that are protective of the environment, the undersigned organizations believe Major League Baseball, in aligning with Scotts' current program, is vastly out of step and doing a disservice to greening efforts.

Because baseball and spring lawn care seasons are upon us, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this with you as soon as possible and look forward to your response by February 25. Please contact Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides (701 E Street SE #200, Washington, DC 20003, 202-543-5450) as a representative of the signatories below.

Sincerely,

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