

Facilitating Implementation of Residential Turf IPM

National IPM Symposium
April 5, 2006
Dr. Marion S. Gold
University of Rhode Island

America Likes Lawns

- 53 million households have lawns
- 30 million acres in lawn





- Lawn considered source of beauty, pleasure and measure of economic value
- Many people consider use of lawn chemicals essential to maintain an ideal lawn
- Big lush lawns have detractors

Concerns

- Pesticides in water
- Nutrients in water
- Water use
- Long-term impact on
- human health
- Evolution of pest resistance
- Mortality of beneficial insects
- Impact on wildlife and broader ecosystem



Consumer Trends

- More and more consumers aware of environmental problems
- But, time, money, convenience, simplicity are critical

Residential Chemical Use Remains High

- In 2004 consumer retail sales for lawn and garden products > \$36.8 billion (EPA)
- Annual expenditures by homeowners on pesticides increased from over \$1billion in 1980 to almost \$ 2 billion in 1990 (EPA)

Environmentally Friendly Lawn Care Programs Exist in Every State



A Better Way to Manage Your Landscape-
Integrated Pest Management

Audubon International © 2005



Turf IPM not easily translated into a consistent, simple marketing message

IPM is not as marketable as the “Four Step Program” or “Weed & Feed”



EPA GreenScape Guidelines

- Test your soil annually before any application of fertilizer.
- Apply products sparingly, no more than 2 lbs. of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per year, for example.
- Choose organic fertilizers that slowly release nutrients over time.
- Read, understand, and follow all pesticide product labeling.
- Avoid run-off - do not apply fertilizers or pesticides within 100 feet of surface waters or wetlands, when the ground is frozen or when there is a chance of rain. Minimize lawn areas, replacing turf with native and other low maintenance plantings.
- Improve soil structure by aerating your lawn and top dressing with compost.
- Grasscycle - leave grass clippings in place (don't bag) when mowing.
- Use the least toxic method for weed and pest control (such as hand pulling).
- Cut lawn no shorter than 3" to encourage deep roots.
- Don't over water lawns (excess water washes out soil nutrients).

Charge to Speakers

- What are the significant problems with turf management practices?
- What are the challenges from an organizational and societal perspective?
- What solutions can their organizations offer?

Speakers Today

- Rich Martinez, Chief Environmental Officer, Scotts Miracle-Gro Company
- Jay Feldman, Director, Beyond Pesticides
- Dr. Frank Rossi, Turfgrass Science, Cornell University

Challenges

- Can lawn and garden distributor sales network be trained on use of residential IPM?
- Can we incorporate residential IPM training into the training modules give by registrants and product manufacturers?
- Can sales associates in retail channels of trade be trained in residential IPM? With large turnover, continuous training is required.

