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TURF WEED KILLER

Low Risk Herbicides Provide New, “Green” Option to U.S. Lawn Care Professionals

Executive Summary

It seems that everyone’s favorite color these days is green, and it’s not a monetary or fashion statement but rather one of sustainability and environmental responsibility. Today homeowners and businesses look to increase the green factor not only in their homes and offices but also in their lifestyle choices. Lawn care operators have a tremendous opportunity to partner with their customers in green endeavors by offering lawn and landscape services built upon sustainable practices.

When lawn care operators provide an environmentally responsible alternative, such as Engage Agro USA’s Fiesta® Turf Weed Killer, they are able to help their clients achieve an enviable lawn without detriment to the environment, family, or beloved pets.

Snapshot of Current Lawn Care Market

When assessing today's lawn care market, several factors should be taken into consideration. One of the key influences weighing in is recent industry regulation in Canada. As of Earth Day, April 22, 2009, several Canadian provinces, including Quebec, Ontario, and Nova Scotia, have banned synthetic pesticides – including herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides – for cosmetic use. Lawn care professionals and residents were left with very few options to combat tough weeds in lawns, sports fields, parks, school grounds, and playgrounds.

As a low-risk selection, Fiesta quickly became the weed control standard for many lawn care professionals. The welcome success of Fiesta in Canada indicates that low-risk herbicide would also prove beneficial in the U.S. market.

Sentiment in the United States may also lead to similar bans in the near future. For example, the city of Evanston, Ill., adopted the "Sustainable Pest Control and Pesticide Reduction Policy" in April 2010. It requires city employees, agents, and contractors to follow natural lawn care practices and prohibits the use of conventional pesticides. This adoption is a direct result of the municipality's desire to use more environmentally friendly products in areas where people may come into contact with the product.

While decisions have not been made at the federal level, and federal law usually trumps state or local legislation, several Eastern states have taken a proactive stance with regards to potential regulation and have already taken measures to implement bans or restrictions in

advance of any nationwide standards.

The ripe U.S. legislative environment combined with burgeoning community support for sustainable lawn practices will be key factors in building and maintaining demand for low-risk herbicides in the United States. Another key factor will be inevitable consumer trends such as the demand for greener products and practices that would likely occur even without regulatory impetus.

Low-Risk Herbicides: Business Benefits

One way the lawn care industry can ensure that it stays on the same trajectory as consumer demand is to get ahead of the curve and provide a variety of options in advance of bans. Since low-risk herbicides provide an alternative to traditional herbicides, they can fill an important role for lawn care operators.

Adding a low-risk herbicide – currently Fiesta is the only post-emergent, selective herbicide approved by the EPA's Biopesticide Division and labeled for broadleaf weed control – will allow lawn care operators to expand the scope of service options for the increasingly environmentally savvy homeowner.

As U.S. families continue to make the "staycation" a chic option, the trend to invest more in their outdoor living spaces should also continue. These same consumers want service providers whose products help create an enhanced outdoor living space and one that is safer for their children and pets to enjoy.

Fiesta will be a standout with lawn care operators and homeowners due to its bevy of consumer-friendly benefits: speed, no



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unpleasant odor, faster re-entry to the treated area, effectiveness at cooler temperatures, and it is rainfast within hours.

Why Low-Risk Herbicides?

Low-risk pesticides, which are used to control pests, pathogens, and weeds, are derived from commonly occurring sources such as animals, plants, bacteria, and minerals. For example, canola oil and baking soda have pesticidal activity.

Fiesta is considered a low-risk herbicide because it is made from commonly used substances and nontoxic methods to control weeds. As a mineral-based herbicide, Fiesta causes oxidative stress within the plant at the cellular level that in turn causes tissue necrosis and ultimately plant death. Conventional herbicides generally use complex, toxic materials to directly kill the plant.

The active ingredient in Fiesta is iron chelate – FeHEDTA. It is quickly absorbed by the leaf tissue and transported down to the root; leaf tissue turns black or brown and the weed dies. Since broadleaf weeds (dicots) absorb more iron than grasses (monocots), Fiesta's mode of action is selective. That makes Fiesta a smart choice for use on a variety of sites, including lawns, golf courses, right-of-way turf, non-crop areas, cemeteries, and publicly owned space such as parks, schools, and athletic fields.

Even while being considered less toxic to the environment, Fiesta is powerful enough to kill a wide range of broadleaf weeds. It can be used on sites with Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass or fescue, for the control of many common lawn weeds such as dandelion, white

clover, and bull thistle, and for the suppression of broadleaf plantain.

Benefits of Using Fiesta Turf Weed Killer:

- Fast acting; noticeable results in 24 to 48 hours
- Effective in cool temperatures (as low as 50°F)
- Formula is derived from iron, which occurs abundantly in nature
- Environmentally responsible; no extensive use precautions as with most conventional herbicides
- Non-volatile, stable formula that is easier to use around sensitive ornamental plants
- No special handling or personal protective equipment required
- Re-entry by people and pets after product dries
- No unpleasant odor
- Rainfast within three hours
- Can use on seedling turf seven days after emergence and seeding can be complete 24 hours after application

Who Wins with Low-Risk Herbicides?

Lawn care operators who already offer natural programs or other environmentally focused services to their current clientele will be a step ahead with regards to opening up this new revenue source. As the demand for sustainable lawn and turf service continues to rise, it will be vital that lawn care operators evolve with the industry and provide green alternatives.

Operators who currently offer chemical application as part of their service portfolio should closely examine the benefits of this potential income channel. It could help keep



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current clients who are looking to reduce their environmental footprint or even bring in new clients attracted by the new, lower-impact product now available and approved for use in the U.S. market.

For those not yet making inroads to sustainable lawn care practices, low-risk herbicides could serve as a bridge product, leading to a new source of revenue or entirely new service programs.

In addition to homeowners, there is an increased awareness of low-risk herbicide benefits among municipalities and governments – especially those with current or potential bans. This increased attention should help boost demand for service providers using sustainable practice models across the board in the future.

Conclusion

Now is the time to learn as much as possible about low-risk herbicides and the role they play in the future of lawn and turf care. Many indicators point to additional bans and restrictions on the use of traditional herbicides in the coming months and years, which will continue to grow awareness and consumer demand for sustainable products such as Fiesta.

By adding low-risk herbicides to their portfolios, lawn care operators have a tremendous opportunity to tap into an emerging customer stream.

For additional product label information, including the Materials Safety Data Sheet, and to find out how to purchase Fiesta, please visit www.fiestaweedkiller.com.

This site will also help dedicated professionals stay up-to-date on lawn-care-related green information.

Mark B. Long
Turf Business Manager for Engage Agro USA

“Fiesta’s low-risk profile compares favorably to many everyday household consumer products. Its active ingredient, iron HEDTA, has been used safely as a liquid fertilizer in soil and foliar applications in plants for many years. It’s a sustainable product that provides excellent results.”

Cameron Wilson Chief
Technical Officer/MP of
Operations, Neudorff North
America

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