

TruGreen's PESP Strategy

Describe your Organization's Five-Year Goals Related to Pesticide Risk Reduction

We intend to replace older chemistries with products that have improved environmental characteristics and meet EPA's strategy on use of reduced risk pesticides. We will accomplish this through annual review of our approved materials list to deselect products that do not meet these goals and add alternate products registered for control of key pests impacting lawns and landscapes. The approved materials list is our compass for the direction we provide region technical managers in development of IPM-based programs and their guidance to branches on product selection and use.

We have embarked on a multi-year campaign to replace older fleet that do not have the capability to target apply pesticides using our patented on-demand lawn injection system to reduce use of pre-mixtures of fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns. All medium duty trucks built since 2000 are equipped with self-contained, spray tanks and pumping systems to allow customized applications to individual lawns. Over the next five years we intend to retrofit current fleet and develop new application technologies to further reduce the need to premix pesticides and fertilizers.

We have developed new program offerings to provide consumers choice in their lawn care services. We have converted two of the 15 regions to the new program in 2008 and will adjust the offering and phase in additional regions over the next two-three years as we gain operational experience and obtain feedback from consumers.

We are working with new suppliers on alternate reduced risk chemistries, biopesticide products and natural products; and monitor research developments at universities and leading suppliers that support IPM.

Our vision is to develop programs that 1) meet consumer needs for a healthier, sustainable landscape, 2) promote the environmental benefits of lawns and landscapes, 3) reduce overall use of pesticides by 2013.

What do you envision doing (broadly) to try to resolve your major issues?

We believe we have the capability, leadership support, and commitment to further improve our program offerings in line with PESP goals. Using our established criteria for selection and approval of products that exceed EPA standards, we will replace older chemistries with newer products that meet the criteria for reduced risk and/or have improved environmental fate characteristics. These standards are the 1st step in our overall strategy to reduce our use of pesticides and when used the products selected pose lower risk to the environment.

The implementation of our PESP strategy requires region oversight for the development of sound pest management practices and use of structured training and a mentor program for our route managers to improve their competency in basics of plant and pest life cycles

and improve their diagnostic skills to better target pesticide use and improve their proficiency in application best practices, as well as training on spill response.

We are embarking on a 3-year campaign with focused leadership to achieve the following goals:

1. Reduce overall use of pesticides on lawns.
2. Develop application equipment that promotes IPM and reduces fuel consumption.
3. Implement green alternative programs.
4. Educate consumers and the public on cultural best practices and environmental benefits of properly cared for lawns.

We will monitor our success by measuring consumer acceptance and changes in purchase behavior as well as key metrics including changes in product use over time.

Goal 1 and Tactics

Reduce overall use of pesticides on lawns.

1. Select products that fit an overall reduced risk use strategy (e.g. require lower ai/acre for similar efficacy, have a lower environmental risk profile, have improved toxicology profile).
 2. Phase out general applications of pesticides in spray mixtures with fertilizers. (e.g. reconfigure service trucks with dual line spray injection system that draws fertilizer solutions from one spray tank and dilute pesticide mixtures from a separate spray tank to the spray application nozzle via a dual-line hose and patented injection gun).
 3. Establish metrics to monitor product use change from year to year (e.g. use weekly branch chemical usage reports to capture acres as lawns in total and acreage treated by products (e.g. preemergent vs. postemergent broadleaf controls) for all major use categories).
 4. Monitor change in consumer acceptance and service call backs for missed pests in lawn.
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Goal 2 and Tactics

Develop application equipment that promotes IPM and reduces fuel consumption.

1. Upgrade fleet to maximize technician's options for targeted pest management (e.g. equip trucks with multiple spray tanks, install dual-line systems on all trucks, and develop injection at reel systems for greater program options in a service route).
2. Develop fuel-efficient route trucks (e.g. develop electric pumping systems to replace PTO-powered pumping systems, optimize route truck storage

- requirements to allow use of smaller, more fuel efficient chassis to reduce idling of vehicles while spraying and reduce mileage driven to service accounts).
3. Develop injection-on demand for ride-on lawn application equipment.
 4. Develop alternate techniques for protecting trees from pests (e.g. explore reduced risk products applied as basal drenches or with effective injection systems to reduce air-borne application of pesticides to landscapes).

Metrics will include changes to fleet configuration and its effect on fuel usage, documentation of changes among routes where injection systems are in effect vs. non-routes where fleet has not been equipped with injection systems, as well as changes with time in trees treated with soil/trunk applications vs. foliar spray treatments for insects.

Goal 3 and Tactics

Implement green alternative programs.

1. Design and pilot consumer programs that provide consumers options for lawn fertilization and pest management strategies that include natural alternative products.
2. Refine and expand green alternative programs to more areas of the country in based on lessons learned in the pilot locations.
3. Complete the conversion of lawn program options to promote and expand green alternative programs across the United States by 2010.

Metrics will test effectiveness of marketing green alternatives and consumer satisfaction with results achieved. (e.g. conduct consumer research using separate panels of homeowners in surveys during the springtime season and on-going surveys of same customers to gauge acceptance based on lawn results).

Goal 4 and Tactics

Educate consumers and the public on cultural best practices and environmental benefits of properly cared for lawns.

1. Expand current web-site content to address consumer concerns and pesticide use (e.g. expand FAQs, provide links to 3rd party agencies to address consumer questions on pesticides, expand site to discuss pests and cultural practices to mitigate pests in lawns).
2. Promote consumer awareness of environmental benefits of lawns (e.g. develop improved public relations campaign of lawn benefits and proper use of pesticides, expand use of e-mail alerts to customers to better explain proper mowing and watering practices to reduce pests in lawns).

We will monitor the changes to our content as well as their effectiveness as consumer education tips by their distribution and frequency of hits at our web site.