

We stand for stewardship and innovation

representing Canada's plant science industry

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Re: Resolution: Reducing garden chemical pesticide use in 2011, Jan 7, 2011, Shellbrook Chronicle

I support columnist Sara Williams' suggestion that gardeners be judicious about their use of pest control products. Integrated pest management – assessing the problem and using the right tool at the right time – is something Canada's plant science industry is constantly advocating. Where Williams' column is not supportable is with her mischaracterization of the impacts associated with pesticides.

Before any pesticide – whether that be a "natural" or synthetic – can be used in Canada, it must undergo a comprehensive scientific review and risk assessment by Health Canada to identify any potential threats to human health or the environment. In addition to a comprehensive set of over 200 tests, Health Canada reviews all additional scientifically credible studies that exist before a pesticide is approved.


Through this process pesticides receive a greater breadth of scrutiny than any other regulated product to ensure they will not harm the environment or the health of current or future generations. Only products that meet Health Canada's strict health and safety standards are registered for use.

The fact of the matter is pesticides help control threats to human health (such as rats and mosquitoes), they protect private and public properties from insect, weed and disease infestations and they help ensure that Canadians have a safe and affordable supply of food thereby contributing to healthier communities and greater well-being and prosperity.


By all means, look at all the options for creating the healthiest garden possible and if pesticides are needed to control a pest problem, be sure to follow the directions and rest assured that Health Canada has reviewed the safety of that product.


Sincerely,
Lorne Hepworth
President, CropLife Canada - *representing the plant science industry*


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