

Why Scotts Miracle-Gro decided to phase out neonicotinoid insecticides

Scotts Miracle-Gro Co. made an unusual move last year when the company announced it would remove a class of insecticides linked to bee deaths from its Ortho brand of home and garden products by 2021.

The decision was timely: the company's main customers were, one by one, announcing goals to phase out products with neonicotinoids—neonics for short—from store shelves.

Lowe's, The Home Depot, and Wal-Mart accounted for more than 60 percent of Scotts Miracle-Gro's sales in 2016. All three have committed to remove neonics by 2018.

"It's a chance to differentiate us from our competitors," Tim Martin, vice president and general manager of the Ortho, Roundup and TomCat brands, told Bloomberg BNA.

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Ortho's neonic alternatives work by killing bugs on contact.... The company's four neonic alternatives contain pyrethrins and spinosad, plant and bacteria-based pesticides, and sulfur.

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In making its commitment, Ortho stepped into a heated debate over declining pollinator health. Though pesticides contribute to the problem, so do parasitic mites, landscapes barren of wild flowers and grasses, and climate change. The makers of neonicotinoids, and the farmers who benefit from their bug-killing properties, have urged the public not to jump to conclusions on the chemicals' impacts on bees.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Scotts Miracle-Gro Leads Pack in Cutting Bee-Harming Pesticides](#)