Be Sure to Follow Best-Management Practices When Planting Treated Seed

New “BeSure!” campaign from Growing Matters offers farmers, applicators a range of free tips and reminders this planting season to protect crops, pollinators and other wildlife

(April 15, 2019) – An agricultural industry collaboration led by Growing Matters, a coalition committed to neonicotinoid product stewardship, today launched “BeSure!” – a stewardship-awareness campaign to promote best-management practices to farmers and applicators who use neonic products.

Powered by Growing Matters along with the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) and the National Pesticide Safety Education Center (NPSEC), BeSure! is designed to strengthen awareness of stewardship practices to protect bees and other wildlife during the handling, planting and disposal of treated seeds, and from other neonic applications used throughout the growing season.

As farmers and applicators take to the field for planting, they’re reminded to do the following:

✓ Be sure to always read and follow the label when using treated seed
✓ Be sure to use the right amount of an appropriate seed lubricant to minimize dust
✓ Be sure to clean planters in non-sensitive areas and clean or cover up any seed spills
✓ Go to GrowingMatters.org for a wealth of free tips and reminders

“Seed treatments provide farmers with an economical means of protecting seeds and seedlings against early-season insect pests and diseases – resulting in stronger and more uniform stands, healthier plants and higher crop yields,” says Jane DeMarchi, Vice President of Government and Regulatory Affairs for ASTA. “Farmers understand the importance of reducing risks to bees and birds by using these products safely and responsibly. Through efforts like the Guide to Seed Treatment Stewardship and ‘BeSure!’, the seed industry is committed to reinforcing product stewardship by providing useful guidelines for managing treated seeds to minimize potential off-target exposures to wildlife.”

The first phase of the campaign uses traditional, social and digital media to target Midwest farmers and emphasize effective stewardship practices when using neonic products. Farmers will be directed to GrowingMatters.org, an interactive website with up-to-date stewardship tips and information. The BeSure! site also integrates ASTA’s Guide to Seed Treatment Stewardship, which includes videos and brochures to show how treated seeds can be used to avoid harmful exposures to bees and other wildlife. Additional links will explain how other neonic applications should be used responsibly, including the comprehensive Insect Pollinators and Pesticide Product Stewardship guide.

“Reading and following the label on any product containing a pesticide is critical to safeguard growers and applicators, as well as pollinators and other wildlife,” says Tom Smith, executive director of NPSEC. “The BeSure! campaign with its focus on pollinator stewardship will provide growers and applicators additional information and resources to help protect pollinators during agricultural operations.”

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About Growing Matters
Agriculture and horticulture are key to nourishing families and communities. Feeding a growing population, enhancing the beauty of our surroundings, and a sustained commitment to environmental protection are fundamental needs that matter. Crop protection products, both natural and synthetic, are important tools that protect plants from tough and invasive pests that can devastate crops and urban landscapes. Growing Matters is funded by a consortium of companies committed to open and healthy scientific discourse on stewardship, benefits and alternatives to neonicotinoid insecticides in North America. Consortium members include Bayer, Syngenta, Valent U.S.A. and Mitsui Chemicals Agro, Inc.

Go to www.GrowingMatters.org for the information, reports, videos and infographics on the benefits of neonicotinoid insecticides.

About American Seed Trade Association (ASTA)
Founded in 1883, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) represents over 700 companies involved in seed production, plant breeding and related industries in North America. ASTA is the leading voice of action in all matters concerning the development, marketing and movement of seed, associated products and services throughout the world. The association's broad membership offers varieties from alfalfa to zucchini and all production types including conventional, organic and biotech. ASTA promotes the development of better seed to produce better crops for a better quality of life. Go to www.betterseed.org.

About National Pesticide Safety Education Center (NPSEC)
The National Pesticide Safety Education Center serves and supports extension Pesticide Safety Education Programs in all states and US territories. NPSECworks to strengthen this national system by improving the quality, consistency, and accessibility of educational offerings, promoting collaboration and leveraging of educational resources and learning assessment tools. For more information, go to www.npsec.us.

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