

# NEWS, NOTES & QUOTES



National Newsletter of the Mulch & Soil Council

December 2022

## COUNCIL NEWS

*Happy  
Holiday  
Wishes*



On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the Mulch & Soil Council, we want to **THANK YOU** for your participation and support this past year. Without your membership, we would not be able to work with Federal and State agencies, provide industry education and training, respond to industry issues or develop industry guidelines to help protect and advance your business opportunities. We look forward to continuing to be of service to you and representing the industry's interests for 2023.

###

**HOLIDAY  
CLOSING**

With predictions for millions of people traveling over the next few weeks, we encourage everyone to drive safely. The MSC office will close December 23 and reopen January 2. We look forward to serving you in the coming year.

###

**JANUARY  
COMMITTEE  
Meetings**

The next meetings of MSC committees will be held in San Antonio, TX, on Wednesday afternoon, January 18, 2023, starting at 1:30pm. The tentative schedule of events include:

1:30pm-2:30pm MSC Certification Organic Sub-Committee

2:45pm-3:45pm MSC Certification Committee

4:00pm-5:00pm MSC Legislative & Regulatory Committee

Unless otherwise announced, all meetings of the Mulch & Soil Council are open to any member in good standing; however, a committee may call an executive session on advice of counsel to discuss sensitive issues when necessary. Participation of observers in discussions is determined by the committee chair. If you plan to attend any or all committee meetings, we would appreciate your letting the office know in order for us to allow



enough seating space for everyone. Contact [membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org](mailto:membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org) to reserve your seat.

###

## JANUARY BOARD MEETING



The MSC Board of Directors will convene its next meeting on Thursday, January 19, at 8:00a.m.-12:00p.m. in San Antonio, TX. If any member has an issue they would like the Board to consider, please submit your topic to Executive Director Robert LaGasse at [execdir@mulchandsoilcouncil.org](mailto:execdir@mulchandsoilcouncil.org) no later than 5:00p.m. Central Time on January 4th. All meetings of the MSC Board of Directors are open to any member in good standing; however, the Board may call an executive session on advice of counsel to discuss sensitive issues when necessary. Participation of observers in discussions is determined by the Board president. If you plan to attend, we would appreciate your letting the office know in order for us to allow enough seating space for everyone. To reserve your space, contact [membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org](mailto:membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org) to register.

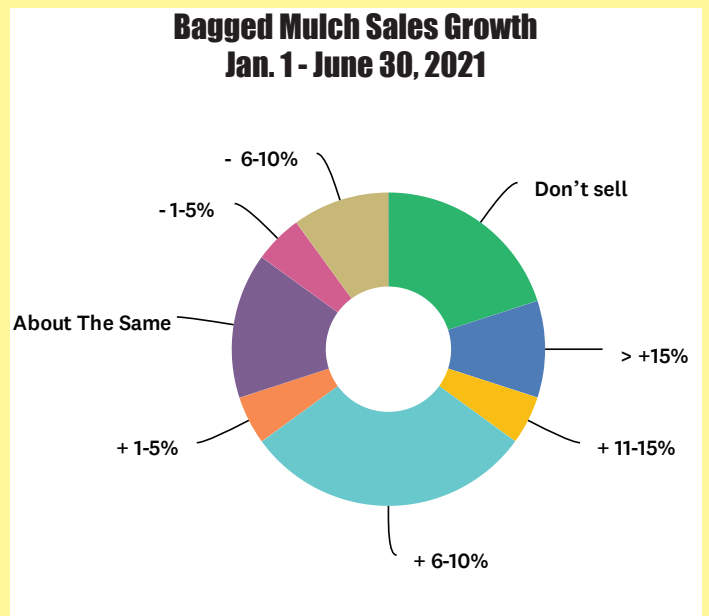
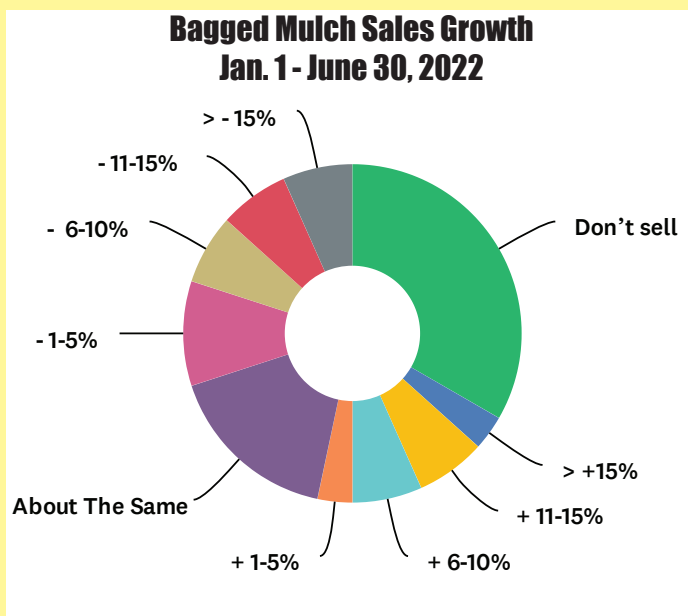
###

## Annual Sales Growth Survey January 1 - June 30, 2022 & 2021

In August to September 2022, the Mulch & Soil Council surveyed its membership to determine the growth in high season sales for January 1 - June 30, 2022. This time period represents an estimated 60% of total industry sales each year. The survey data was then compared to the same data collected from members for the 2021 high season (1/1 - 6/30). Industry sales are divided into 4 main categories which are Bagged Mulch, Bulk Mulch, Bagged Soils and Bulk Soils. Here are the results of the 2022 survey compared to the 2021 survey for the same period.

### Bagged Mulch

There was a significant increase in the number of members reporting no sales in bagged mulches (+13%). The number of members reporting "about the same" sales in '22 and '21 were 16% and 15% respectively, or about the same. Members reporting increases in sales for '22 were about 20% compared to 45% in '21, with the greatest decline in the +6%-10% category (-23%). The number of members reporting a decline in '22 sales was 30% compared to 15% in '21. Members reporting a decrease in sales greater than -11% were 13% of respondents in '22 whereas no members reported decreased sales of -11% or more in '21. While the 2022 overall sales growth of bagged mulches appears to be somewhat lesser than the 2021 sales growth, the 2021 industry sales were still at historically elevated levels following the Covid-19 pandemic and is likely the effect of "settling back" to industry norms.





# Mulch, meet your maker.



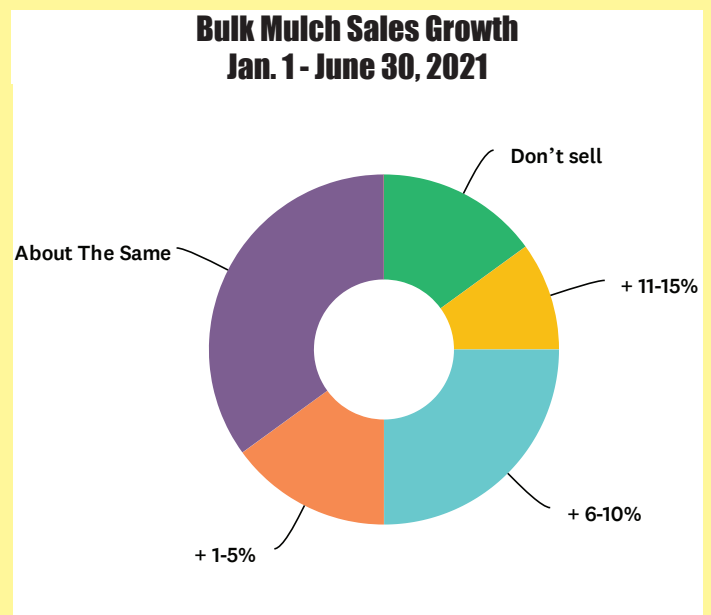
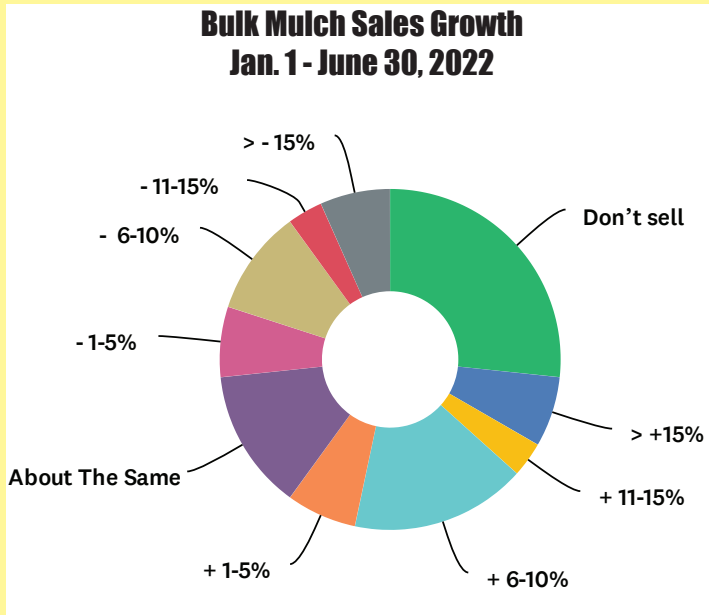
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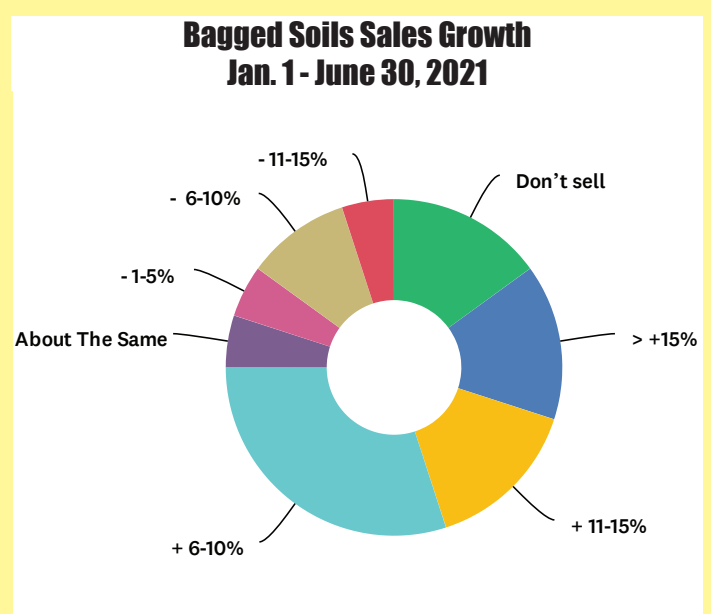
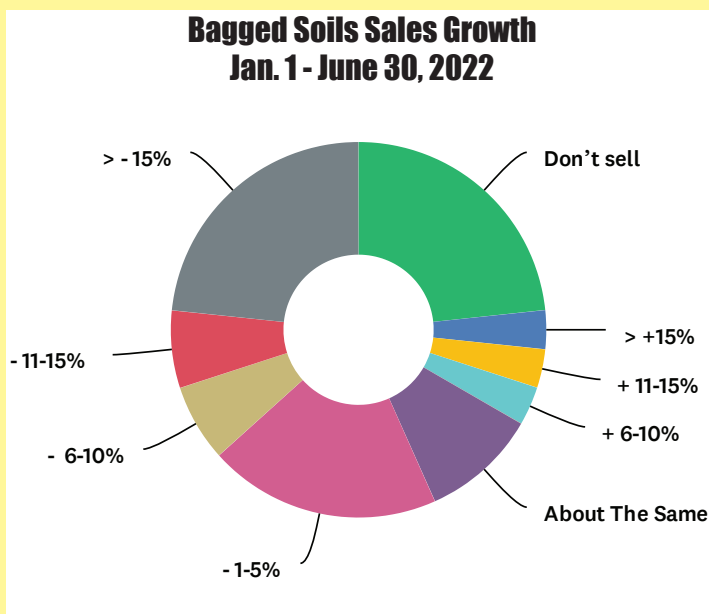
## Bulk Mulch

Again, there was a significant increase in the number of members reporting no sales in bulk mulches (+11%). The number of members reporting “about the same” sales in ‘22 and ‘21 were 13% and 35% respectively, a decline of more than half. Members reporting increases in sales for ‘22 were about 32% compared to 50% in ‘21, with the greatest decline in the +6%-10% category (-9%). The number of members reporting a decline in ‘22 sales was ~27% compared to 0% in ‘21. Members reporting a decrease in sales of -6%-10% were 10% of respondents in ‘22 followed by -1%-5% and >-15% at ~7% each. Again, no members reported decreased bulk sales in ‘21. While the 2022 overall sales growth of bulk mulches appears to be significantly less than the 2021 sales growth, the 2021 industry sales were also at historically elevated levels following the Covid-19 pandemic and is likely the effect of “settling back” to industry norms.



## Bagged Soils

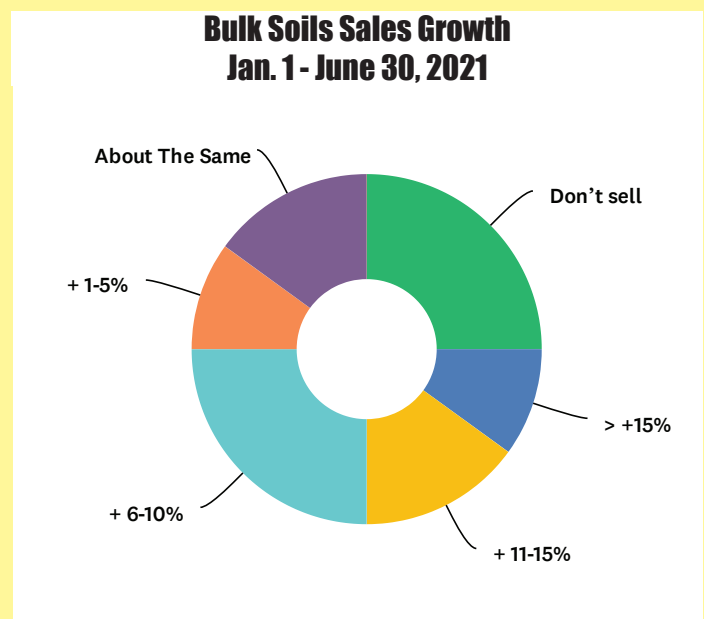
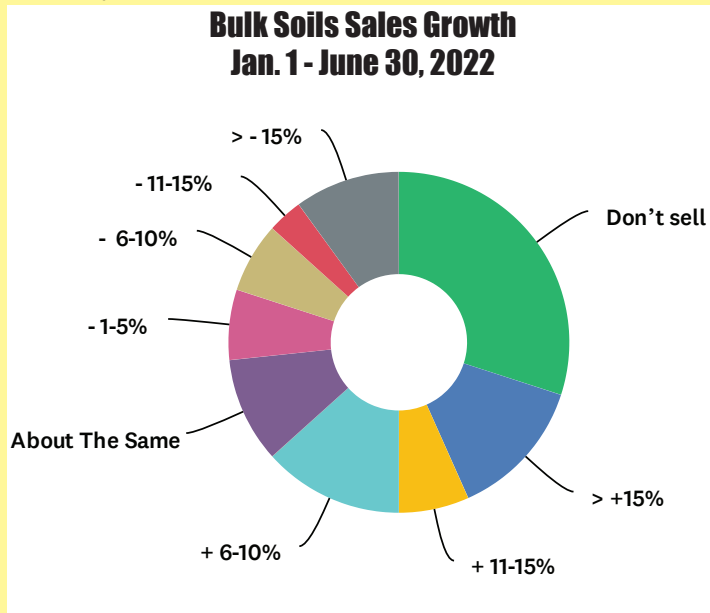
Again, the number of members reporting no sales in bagged soils increased by +8%. The number of members reporting “about the same” sales in ‘22 and ‘21 were 10% and 5% respectively. Members reporting increases in sales for ‘22 were about 10% compared to 60% in ‘21, with the greatest change in the +6%-10% category (-27%). The number of members reporting a decline in ‘22 sales was 56% compared to 20% in ‘21. Members reporting a decrease in sales of >-15% were 23% of respondents in ‘22 followed by -1%-5% at 20%. The greatest loss category for 2021 sales was -6%-10% at 10% of respondents. While the 2022 overall sales growth of bagged soils appears to be significantly less than the 2021 sales growth, the 2021 industry sales were also at historically elevated levels following the Covid-19 pandemic and is likely the effect of “settling back” to industry norms.





## Bulk Soils

The number of members reporting no sales in bulk soils increased from 25% in '21 to 30% in '22. The number of members reporting "about the same" sales in '22 and '21 were 10% and 15% respectively. Members reporting increases in sales for '22 were about 33% compared to 50% in '21, with the greatest change in the +6%-10% category (-12%). The number of members reporting a decline in '22 sales was 26% compared to 0% in '21. Members reporting a decrease in sales of >-15% were 10% of respondents in '22 followed by -1%-5% and -6-10% at 7% each. Again, no members reported decreased bulk sales in '21. While the 2022 overall sales growth of bulk soils appears to be significantly less than the 2021 sales growth, the 2021 industry sales were also at historically elevated levels following the Covid-19 pandemic and is likely the effect of "settling back" to industry norms.



## Market Forces

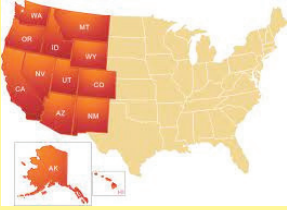
Survey participants were asked to rank each of a series of market forces based on their perceived significance and impact on their product sales for 2022. The results were as follows in ranked order:

1. **CONSUMER DEMAND:** According to 56% of all survey participants, the #1 greatest impact on 2022 sales was a decline in consumer demand. In 2020, consumer demand boomed as a result of Covid-19 lock downs, and people either expanded their existing gardening or took-up gardening for the first time. That burst in industry growth continued strongly into 2021 until lock downs began to ease in the 2nd quarter, and consumers shifted their time and discretionary spending to travel and other activities. As the market settles back into historic demand patterns, the year-to-year sales data appears as a decline when sales are actually returning to historic volumes after the pandemic.
2. **WEATHER:** Over 35% of participants ranked the weather as the 2nd most significant impact on sales for 2022.
3. **OPERATIONAL ISSUES:** A total of 48% of survey participants ranked operational issues (labor, freight, equipment issues, etc.) as the third most significant impact on industry sales in 2022.
4. **SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES:** Raw materials shortages, parts availability and machine/equipment backlogs were some of the supply chain issues that over 42% of survey participants ranked as the 4th most significant impact on 2022 industry sales growth.
5. **GAIN OR LOSS OF CUSTOMERS:** According to over 40% of participants, gains and losses in customer bases were the 5th most significant impact on company sales growth for the year.

We appreciate the time and effort from all member companies that participated in our annual sales growth surveys and shared their information for the benefit of the industry. Anyone who has a question about the survey data should send their question to Shelli Williams at [membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org](mailto:membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org) or call the Council office at 806.832.1810.

## LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY NEWS

### REMINDER: WESTERN REGION W&M



At its regional meeting in October, the Western Weights & Measures Association (WWMA) of the National Conference on Weights & Measures (NCWM) requested a special training session be conducted by David Sefcik of NIST / OWM on *checking the net contents of mulch and soil packages*. The WWMA consists of 13 states including AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA & WY. Over 40 state control officials participated, and more training often translates into more testing. MSC held its own biennial plant managers training course on weights and measures in August and over 40 industry representatives participated there as well. If you feel your personnel may need to brush up on their weights & measures knowledge for this coming sales season, contact Shelli Williams at [membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org](mailto:membership@mulchandsoilcouncil.org) or call 806.832.1810 for information on training options and costs.

###

### MN DNR JW RECLASSIFICATION

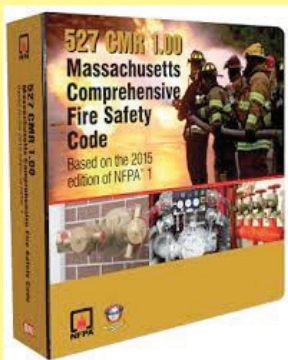


The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources issued a proposed emergency rule making to classify jumping worms (*Amyntas* spp. & *Metaphire* spp) as Prohibited Invasive Species. While some species are known to be present in some Minnesota urban areas, most of Minnesota is not known to have any of the jumping worm species. Jumping worms are currently classified as Unlisted Non-native Species which means they cannot be released into a free-living state, but without regulation as a Prohibited Invasive Species, they can be sold. Under MN statute 84D.05, a Prohibited Invasive Species may not be possessed, imported, purchased, sold, propagated, transported or introduced into the state except under very limited circumstances and permitting. MN DNR states that listing these species as Prohibited Invasive Species would stop sales of jumping worms, strengthen regulations to make sure that worm species that are allowed to be sold are not contaminated with jumping worms, and reduce the potential spread of jumping worms in the state. The DNR will provide best management practices surrounding cleaning equipment, heat treatment of compost and other actions to companies that work with soil, mulch, compost, or other materials that may harbor jumping worms.



###

### MA AMENDS FIRE CODE ON MULCH



The State of Massachusetts has amended its statewide fire code to prohibit “newly applied” mulch within 18” of a combustible portion of any building surface; HOWEVER, the code exempts any building containing 6 dwelling units or less. Single family homes are excluded from the setback requirement, but commercial buildings such as restaurants, retail stores and office buildings are not.

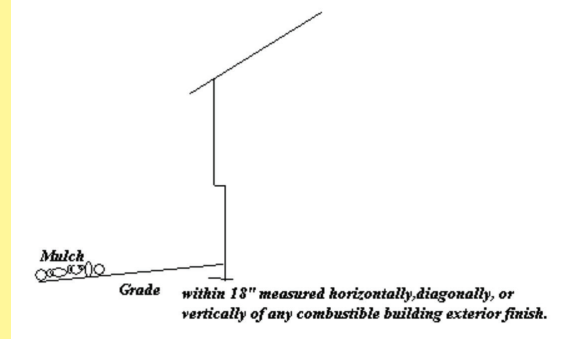
Effective December 9, 2022, the State of Massachusetts has amended its statewide fire code under 527 CMR 1 Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code Permanent Regulations [pg. 61] as follows:

10.13.3.

Add: 10.13.3 The Use of *mulch*

10.13.3.1 through 10.13.10.4.2

Figure 10.13.3.1(a) Mulch Application





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## FIRE CODE (Cont'd)

Add: 10.13.3.1: *mulch* shall not be newly applied within 18 inches of any combustible portion of any building [See Figure 10.13.3.4.1(a)].

10.13.3.1.1: Section 10.13.3.1 **shall not apply to any building regardless of the existence of fire separations, containing six dwelling units or less.**

10.13.3.2

*mulch*, as used here, shall mean any type of forest material that is produced for the purpose spreading or application over the surface of the soil as a protective cover, to retain moisture, reduce erosion, provide nutrients, and suppress weed growth, seed germination and for general landscaping purposes.

###

## APHIS ADDS NEW PLANT SPECIES TO HOST LIST



Effective immediately, APHIS is adding proven hosts and associated plants to the list of plant species regulated for *P. ramorum*. The pathogen, *P. ramorum*, is the cause of both Sudden Oak Death, a forest disease that has resulted in widespread dieback of several tree species in California and Oregon forests, and Ramorum Blight, which affects the leaves and twigs of numerous other plants in forests and nurseries. This action is necessary to control the artificial spread of *P. ramorum*.

Regulated establishments and nurseries in quarantine areas, as defined in Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 301.92-3 that operate under a compliance agreement may continue to ship proven hosts and associated plants on the updated regulated list, as stated in their current compliance agreement, until the next compliance inspection. Nurseries under compliance must provide the September 2022 list of proven hosts and associated plants of *P. ramorum* at their nursery to regulatory officials prior to the next compliance inspection. At the next compliance inspection, regulatory officials must inspect, potentially sample, and test proven hosts and associated plants. All plants on the proven host and associated plant list must be determined free from *P. ramorum* before they are shipped.

The attached Federal Order identifies the hosts added to the list of plant species regulated for *P. ramorum*. In addition, please see the updated “APHIS Lists of Proven Hosts of and Plants Associated with *Phytophthora ramorum*” dated September 2022, which may be found at this site: [USDA APHIS | \*Phytophthora ramorum\*](#)

For more information about APHIS’ *P. ramorum* regulatory program, please contact the *P. ramorum* National Policy Manager, William Wesela, at (301) 851-2229.

###

## CHITOSAN EXEMPTED UNDER FIFRA



In November, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a rule adding chitosan (Poly-D-Glucosamine), a naturally occurring substance found in the cell walls of all crustaceans, most fungi, and the exoskeletons of most insects, to its [minimum risk pesticide](#) exemption list. In doing so, EPA is specifying that the listing also includes those chitosan salts that can be formed when chitosan is mixed with the acids that are listed as active or inert ingredients eligible for use in minimum risk pesticide products.

The purpose of the exemption list is to eliminate the need for the Agency to expend significant resources to regulate products deemed to be of minimum risk to human health and the environment. Products that contain only those active and inert ingredients allowed by the exemption and meet certain Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) requirements are exempt from the normal FIFRA registration requirements. Approximately a decade has passed since a substance was added to the list of ingredients eligible for the minimum risk pesticide exemption.

Chitosan is currently registered with EPA under FIFRA as a fungicide, antimicrobial agent, and **plant growth regulator** that boosts the ability of plants to defend against fungal infections. Chitosan is currently widely available to the public for non-pesti-



## CHITOSAN (CONT'D)

cidal uses, and has established applications in various industries including textiles, cosmetics, beverage processing, and water treatment.

After reviewing the latest available science, reviewing comments on the proposed rule and on the Notice of Data Availability, EPA is now adding chitosan to its list of active ingredients eligible for EPA's minimum risk pesticide exemption. The Agency's analysis of the available data suggests that chitosan and chitosan salts are of low toxicity to humans and no environmental risks of concern have been identified. As a result of this final rule, chitosan products will no longer need to be registered under FIFRA. EPA estimates this action will result in cost savings of up to \$116,000 initially and about \$3,400 per year thereafter for registrants and manufacturers of chitosan-containing pesticide products. The final rule is available in docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2019-0701](#) at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

###

## EPA ON CARBARYL (SEVIN)



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed measures to improve protections for human health and the environment, including endangered species, from exposures to carbaryl, an insecticide that is used on a wide variety of food and feed crops, as well as in turf management, ornamental production, rangeland and residential settings.

Carbaryl is currently undergoing Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) pesticide registration review. This process requires EPA to reevaluate each pesticide every 15 years to ensure that risk assessments and risk management decisions reflect the best available science. The improved protections are included in EPA's proposed interim decision (PID), which is a key step in registration review. The PID includes proposed mitigations to address potential risks of concern outlined in EPA's [human health and ecological draft risk assessments](#).

The PID also provides a pilot for evaluating and proposing early mitigation for four vulnerable endangered species while formal endangered species consultation

with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service (the Services) is ongoing. This effort is part of EPA's strategies identified in its comprehensive [Endangered Species Act \(ESA\) Workplan](#) released in April 2022 and the [November 2022 update](#) that aim to pilot improved protections for listed species from select conventional pesticides to help meet the Agency's ESA obligations.

Finally, EPA is also proposing additional ESA mitigation measures to implement the outstanding 2009 Salmonid Species Biological Opinion from the National Marine Fisheries Service, which will also provide protections for these species.

###

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

### 2023 GARDENING INSIGHTS SURVEY



Despite extreme spring weather and growing economic concerns in 2022, gardeners have a positive outlook for 2023. Axiom's newly released Gardening Insights Survey found homeowners in several age groups and experience levels are looking forward to spending more time and money next year. In fact, more than 80% of those surveyed said they plan to spend the same or more money in 2023 than they did this year. 88% expect to spend the same or more time gardening next year as they did in 2022.

The research, conducted by Axiom, a Minneapolis-based marketing firm serving the horticulture, landscaping, and construction industries, found that men report they're spending more money than women, with nearly 87% of males saying they'll spend the same or more in 2023. Younger gardeners are likely to spend more money too, with Gen Y and Gen Z homeowners leading the way.

Newer gardeners are showing signs of growing into the hobby. 48.5% of first-time gardeners and 52.5% of those who have been gardening for 2- 4 years say they will be spending more time in 2023. "We see that as encouraging news," says Kathleen Hennessy, chief marketing officer at Axiom. "This could be a sign that the industry is on track to keep many of the millions of new gardeners who entered the market during COVID. Based on positive feedback from first time gardeners, those who are newer to gardening, Gen Y, and Gen Z respondents, it appears that pandemic gardeners are hooked, and their interest, time and spending will continue to grow."

Big box stores are taking a bigger bite of the garden spend. When asked where homeowners purchased most of their plants in 2022, Independent Garden Centers came in second, behind The Home Depot. "IGCs drop to third among those who spent more money in 2022 — this is a switch from our last survey," adds Hennessy.

When asked what factors may have had homeowners gardening less in 2022, 17% said being back in the office was a diversion. Nearly 15% said bad weather affected how much time they spent in the garden. 35% say they were working on indoor and outdoor home improvement, maintenance, and repair projects.

If they spent less money, where did those funds go? More than 22% said groceries. Nearly 19% spent funds on home improvement projects. 15% said they spent more money at the gas pump and 14% said they were traveling more.

Axiom also asked where gardeners learned about new plants and what social channels they thought offered the best information on new plants and supplies. More than 74% say they learn about new plants from webinars and podcasts. Google searches come in second at 48%. YouTube was the top social medium with 38.5%.

For more information on the Axiom 2023 Gardening Survey, download the report here: [2023 Gardening Survey](#)

###

### AMAZON PUSHES EPA DfE PRODUCTS



The Climate Pledge Friendly program on Amazon now includes antimicrobial products like disinfectants and sanitizers certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Design for the Environment (DfE) program. DfE joins EPA's Safer Choice and 46 other sustainability certifications in Climate Pledge Friendly, which helps customers shop for over 300,000 more sustainable products in the company's online store.

DfE products meet criteria that evaluate human health and environmental effects, product performance, packaging and ingredients. The requirements are intended to:

- Minimize possible risks to human health by excluding ingredients that might have the potential to negatively impact young



## DfE (Cont'd)

- children, cause cancer, or have other negative effects;
- Further protect fish and other aquatic life;
- Minimize pollution of air or waterways and prevent harmful chemicals from being added to the land; and
- Ensure products have no unresolved compliance, enforcement or efficacy issues.

The addition of DfE to the Climate Pledge Friendly program on Amazon follows EPA's [recent modernization of the DfE logo](#). Products with the new label are expected to be available late next year. EPA redesigned the logo to make it more appealing and recognizable to retailers, consumers and purchasers following a request from a coalition that included the Environmental Defense Fund, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Clorox Company, the Procter and Gamble Company, and Reckitt. This coalition's efforts were recognized in early November with a [2022 Safer Choice Partner of the Year award](#).

Products identified as Climate Pledge Friendly are distinguished on Amazon's shopping results and featured in a dedicated section of Amazon's online store. Amazon also provides its customers with detailed web pages that include information on how and why products are certified as sustainable.

###

A proposal by federal regulators to require unique electronic identifiers on large trucks wasn't well received by many of the nation's motor carriers and independent truckers.

In fact, the large majority of the more than 2,000 comments sampled on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's website were clearly either vehemently opposed to the idea, or took a wait-and-see position.

FMCSA floated the idea in a Sept. 23 Federal Register advance notice of proposed rulemaking, saying truck unique electronic identifier technology capable of wirelessly communicating when queried by federal or state motor carrier safety enforcement personnel had the potential to improve efficiency and safety on the roadways, enabling enforcement agencies to focus their efforts on high-risk carriers and drivers.

The ANPRM was posted in response to petition requests by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, first in 2010 and again in 2015.

"As industry continues to grow and more and more people take to the roads, it is imperative that we leverage technology where possible to improve the efficacy of our enforcement programs," CVSA said in written comments that closed Nov. 22.

Those supporting the potential of the idea, but withholding full support due to

## TRUCKERS PUSH BACK ON ELECTRONIC IDENTIFIERS



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## FMCSA (Cont'd)

various uncertainties, included American Trucking Associations, the Truckload Carriers Association and the National Association of Chemical Distributors.

However, hundreds of owner-operators and small truckers, as well as the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, were strongly opposed. The majority of opposition was based on equipment & operational costs, company and driver privacy and information security concerns.

###

## USFS OFFERS \$12.5M FOR WOOD INNOVATION



The USDA on Nov. 17 announced that the U.S. Forest Service is now accepting applications for \$12.5 million in available funds under the Wood Innovations Program. Applications are due Dec. 20.

The agency said the \$12.5 million aims to provide financial assistance for owners of facilities that purchase and process by-products from forest restoration projects including thinning, wildfire resilience activities and habitat management. Owners must identify how their work will use by-products from areas of high or very high risk of severe wildfire or insect and disease infestation based on the high priority firesheds identified in the [Forest Service 10-year Wildfire Crisis Strategy](#) or by using the [Wildfire Risk to Communities](#) and [National Insect and Disease Risk](#) maps.

An additional \$8 million is being offered through the Temporary Bridge Funding Opportunity Program. That funding is available to states and tribes to support the establishment of temporary bridge rental, loan or cost-share programs to protect water resources and reduce water quality degradation during forest-related operations. The funding is to help states and tribes create a program that provides portable skidder bridges, bridge mats or other temporary water crossing structures to loggers and others working in forests areas. These bridges will minimize damage from trucks and other equipment in forested areas, especially sensitive wetlands. Additional information is available on the U.S. Forest Service [website](#)

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## NAICS UPDATES INDUSTRY CODES FOR WOMEN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM



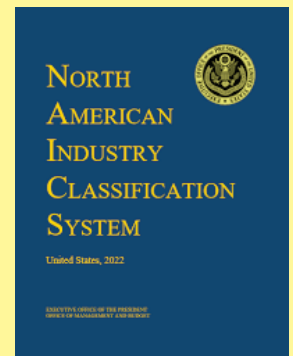
The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is updating the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes authorized for use in the Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contracting Program (WOSB Program). SBA defines a small business as a business with fewer than 1,500 employees and maximum average annual receipts of \$41.5 million. This update is being made to reflect the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) NAICS revision for 2022, identified as NAICS 2022. These changes would impact 85 of the 2017 NAICS codes eligible for use under the WOSB Program.

NAICS 2022 created 111 new industries by reclassifying, combining, or splitting 156 NAICS 2017 industries or their parts. In addition, NAICS 2022 renamed some NAICS industry titles. After review and comparison of the NAICS 2017 and NAICS 2022 industry groups, SBA has determined that the changes affect 85 of the 2017 NAICS codes designated as eligible for the WOSB Program in the March 18, 2022, Federal Register notice.

The 2022 NAICS changes impact 72 NAICS codes designated as eligible for WOSB set-asides and sole-source awards and 13 NAICS codes designated as eligible for ED-WOSB set-asides and sole-source awards.

Following is a breakdown of the number and type of impact the new 2022 NAICS codes have on industries eligible for the WOSB Program:

- 65 2017 NAICS codes are combined to form 28 new 2022 NAICS codes.
- One 2017 NAICS code are split into two 2022 NAICS codes.
- Nine 2017 NAICS codes are given a new 2022 NAICS code.
- Nine 2017 NAICS codes are given a new 2022 NAICS code title (the NAICS code itself will not change).





## NAICS (Cont'd.)

• One 2017 NAICS code is given a new 2022 NAICS code and a new 2022 NAICS code title.

As a result, the total number of NAICS codes eligible under the WOSB program decreases from 759 NAICS codes (2017) to 733 NAICS codes (2022). Here is a selection of codes that relate to the mulch and soil industry and potential customers:

712130 ..... Zoos and Botanical gardens.  
712190..... Nature Parks and Other Similar Institutions.  
111411 ..... Mushroom Production.  
111419 ..... Other Food Crops Grown Under Cover.  
111421 ..... Nursery and Tree Production.  
111422 ..... Floriculture Production.  
112210..... Hog and Pig Farming  
112920..... Horses and Other Equine Production.  
113210..... Forest Nurseries and Gathering of Forest Products.  
115112 ..... soil Preparation, *planting*, and Cultivating.  
321999..... All Other Miscellaneous Wood Product Manufacturing  
325211 ..... Plastics Material and Resin Manufacturing  
325314..... Fertilizer (*mixing* Only) Manufacturing.  
325315 ..... *compost* Manufacturing.  
541320..... *landscape* Architectural Services.  
WOSB Program's website, [www.sba.gov/wosb](http://www.sba.gov/wosb).

###

## MEMBER NEWS

### DURAVANT ACQUIRES MARELEC FOOD TECHNOLOGIES

Duravant LLC ("Duravant"), a global engineered equipment and automation solutions provider to the food processing, packaging and material handling sectors, announced today that it has acquired Marelec Food Technologies ("Marelec"), a leading manufacturer of intelligent portioning and customized weighing and grading solutions headquartered in Nieuwpoort, Belgium. Marelec serves the poultry, meat, seafood and marine sectors, designing and manufacturing innovative turnkey systems that ensure high-quality output and maximum yield for food processors around the world.



Recognized globally as a high-tech solutions provider for secondary processing solutions, Marelec has been serving multi-national customers for nearly 40 years. Their team of engineers and food processing experts are driven by a customer-oriented design philosophy. Using innovative technologies, such as portioning software with intelligent cutting algorithms, their systems are built for high speed and precise performance, helping operators maximize yields and quality.

Marelec's expansive capabilities are showcased at their manufacturing hub in Belgium which houses their R&D center and cooled demo room. Marelec has sales and service centers throughout Europe, the United States and Asia, along with a powerhouse network of distributors across six continents and in over 50 countries.

###

### OLDCASTLE ACQUIRES SOIL MENDER PRODUCTS

Oldcastle APG, a CRH company, has acquired the packaging operations of Sterling Sand and the soil business of Soil Mender Products. The acquisitions of its co-packing partners enable Oldcastle to extend its geographic position and production capabilities in high-demand, high-growth markets to best serve its customers.



With operations in South Carolina and North Carolina, Sterling Sand is a leading regional manufacturer and distributor of specialty sands for industrial, construction, recreation and other end-market uses. An established co-packer for Oldcastle APG's Techniseal business, Sterling Sand is a key partner in the bagging and distribution of its polymeric sand products for customers in the Southeast US. The acquisition of Sterling Sand's packaging operations will enable Techniseal to achieve increased production capacity and market share growth potential in southeastern markets.

Soil Mender Products is a leading regional manufacturer of lawn and garden solutions that promote soil health, biodiversity and outdoor aesthetics while supporting a thriving ecosystem. Located in northwestern Texas, it operates as a co-packer for

## OLDCASTLE (Cont'd.)

Oldcastle APG's large retail customers in the Texas market. Soil Mender's advantageous geographic position, coupled with its exceptional product offerings and industry knowledge, effectively strengthen Oldcastle APG's Lawn & Garden business in the region.

"As North America's leading provider of integrated and sustainable outdoor living solutions, we are excited to welcome Sterling Sand and Soil Mender Products to the APG Family as we enhance our Techniseal and Lawn & Garden manufacturing capabilities," said Tim Ortman, President, Oldcastle APG. "With increased production and growth in the Carolinas, Texas and surrounding markets, we can continue to provide end-to-end outdoor living solutions to customers across the country."

###

## New Member Welcome

The Mulch & Soil Council is pleased to welcome the following companies as new members:

### Producer Members:

*The Organic Mechanics Soil Co., LLC*

Mark Highland

PO Box 272

Modena, PA 19358

[mark@organicmechanicsoil.com](mailto:mark@organicmechanicsoil.com)

[organicmechanicsoil.com](http://organicmechanicsoil.com)

*Wallace Farm, Inc.*

Eric Wallace

14410 Eastfield Rd

Huntersville, NC 28078

[eric@wallacefarmproducts.com](mailto:eric@wallacefarmproducts.com)

[wallacefarmproducts.com](http://wallacefarmproducts.com)

### Affiliate Member:

*Clairvest Group Inc.*

Riley Webb

22 St. Clair Ave E Ste 1700

Toronto, ON M4T2S3

[rileyw@clairvest.com](mailto:rileyw@clairvest.com)

[www.clairvest.com](http://www.clairvest.com)

###

## Certified Product News

### New Certified Products

#### Mulch

Britton Industries

Britton Industries Premium Brown Mulch

#### Landscape Soils

Maryland Environmental Service

Leafgro®

### Recertified Products

#### Mulch

Austin Wood Recycling, Ltd.

Texas Native Cafe Brown Mulch

Homer Industries, LLC

Vigoro Premium Brown Mulch by Homer Industries

Homer Industries, LLC

Vigoro Premium Red Mulch by Homer Industries

Hyponex Corporation

COLORSTAY by Scotts Black Mulch

Hyponex Corporation

COLORSTAY by Scotts Brown Mulch

Hyponex Corporation

COLORSTAY by Scotts Red Mulch

Hyponex Corporation

Florida Select Natural Eucalyptus Mulch

Hyponex Corporation

Nature's Garden Black Mulch

Hyponex Corporation

Nature's Garden Brown Mulch

Hyponex Corporation

Nature's Garden Red Mulch

Landscapers Pride

Hardwood Mulch

Phillips Bark Processing Co., Inc.

Gardenese Pine Bark Mulch

Phillips Bark Processing Co., Inc.

Gardenese Pine Bark Nuggets

Phillips Bark Processing Co., Inc.

Vigoro Premium Black Mulch by Phillips Bark Processing Co.

Phillips Bark Processing Co., Inc.

Vigoro Premium Brown Mulch by Phillips Bark Processing Co.

The Scotts Company

Vigoro Premium Red Mulch by Phillips Bark Processing Co.

The Scotts Company

Nature Scapes Color Enhanced Mulch - Classic Black

The Scotts Company

Nature Scapes Color Enhanced Mulch - Deep Forest Brown

The Scotts Company

Nature Scapes Color Enhanced Mulch - Sierra Red

The Scotts Company

Scotts Florida Select Brown Mulch

The Scotts Company

Scotts Florida Select Natural Mulch

The Scotts Company

Scotts Florida Select Red Mulch

# Certified Product News

## Recertified Products

The Scotts Company  
The Scotts Company  
The Scotts Company  
The Scotts Company

### Mulch

Scotts Nature Scapes Color Enhanced Bark Nuggets - Deep Forest Brown  
Texas Select Classic Black Mulch  
Texas Select Deep Forest Brown Mulch  
Texas Select Sierra Red Mulch

### Landscape Soils

Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Garden Soil All Purpose - For In-Ground Use 0.10-0.06-0.08  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Garden Soil All Purpose 0.09-0.05-0.07  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Garden Soil Flowers 0.09-0.05-0.07  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Garden Soil, Cactus, Palm & Citrus 0.10-0.09-0.07 (w/0.07 iron)  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Nourish  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Nature's Care Organic Garden Soil 0.08-0.06-0.07  
Rod McLellan Company Supersoil Enriched Planting Compost  
Rod McLellan Company Supersoil Garden Amender 0.03-0.03-0.03  
Scotts Miracle-Gro Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Garden Soil Roses 0.10-0.09-0.07  
Scotts Miracle-Gro Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Garden Soil, Trees & Shrubs 0.09-0.05-0.07  
Terrace Brands Southern Roots Gardening Organic Garden Soil 0.04-0.03-0.03

### Premium Soils

Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Nature's Care Organic Potting Mix with Water Conserve 0.18-0.10-0.12  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Nature's Care Organic Raised Bed Soil 0.09-0.08-0.09  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Nature's Care Organic Raised Bed Soil w/Water Conserve 0.09-0.08-0.09  
Rod McLellan Company Supersoil Potting Soil

### Standard Growing Media

Terrace Brands

Southern Roots Gardening Organic Potting Mix 0.06-0.04-0.05

## Withdrawn Products

### Landscape Soils

Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Aerate  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Balance  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Garden Soil Flowers 0.09-0.08-0.09  
Miracle-Gro Lawn Products, Inc. Miracle-Gro Hydrate  
Swiss Farms Products, Inc. Organics Vigoro Organic Garden Soil 0.10-0.05-0.10

### Premium Soils

Swiss Farms Products, Inc.

Organics Vigoro Organic Potting Mix 0.10-0.05-0.05

# Mark Your Calendar





*Happy  
Holidays  
from the  
Mulch & Soil Council*

