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FILM QUESTIONS USE OF PESTICIDES TO KILL DANDELIONS

Hartford to Launch *A Chemical Reaction*

HARTFORD, CONN. — On the heels of a triumphant tour in Canada, the inspirational environmental documentary *A Chemical Reaction* is coming to Connecticut.

The Connecticut chapter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association and its Organic Land Care Program will present the state's premiere of the film March 7 at 2 p.m. at Cinestudio at Trinity College in Hartford. Admission is by donation, with \$10 suggested.

"This critically acclaimed, yet controversial movie questions many of the products currently used to make lawns green and weed free," said CT NOFA president Bill Duesing. "It is based on the truly compelling human-interest story of the first town in North America to successfully ban lawn care pesticides and we are proud and excited to bring it to the state where natural lawn care really gained its foothold in North America."

Directed by Brett Plymale of Portland, Maine, *A Chemical Reaction* was described as "rousing" and awarded four out of five stars by the film critics of the *Montreal Gazette*. The film also drew the ire of representatives from the chemical lawn care industry, who called the film's executive producer, Paul Tukey, an "enviro-maniac" for his stance against synthetic lawn and garden pesticides and fertilizers.

Tukey, a former HGTV host and the founder of the U.S. non-profit organization known as SafeLawns.org, appears frequently on screen during *A Chemical Reaction* while interviewing key figures in the anti-pesticide movement in Canada and the U.S. He said his organization's goal in making the film is to create awareness of the health hazards and environmental degradation associated with lawn care.

"Canadian doctors and the Canadian courts have looked at the toxicity associated with chemical lawn care and have banned these products in much of that nation," said Tukey, who will lead a question-and-answer session after the Hartford screening. "Our hope is that people watch the movie and say, 'Canada has banned these products, why do we still use them in the United States?'"

Connecticut is depicted favorably in the film as the first state in America to ban lawn pesticides around schools daycare centers in 2006. Much of the story, however, focuses on Dr. June Irwin, a dermatologist who spurred the first town in Canada to ban lawn and garden chemicals pesticides in 1991. When Hudson, Quebec, told the lawn care giant then known as ChemLawn that it couldn't apply its products within town borders, it set off a chain of high-profile court cases that culminated in the Canadian Supreme Court in 2001.

The town won the case in a landmark 9-0 decision and the chemical ban soon spread to the entire province of Quebec. Ontario enacted lawn chemical restrictions on Earth Day 2009 and dozens of other municipalities have also passed legislation.

“When we looked at what Hudson accomplished, we asked, ‘Why can Hudson do that and we can’t do that?’” says Nancy Alderman of New Haven in the film. She is president of a Connecticut organization known as Environment and Human Health. “Hudson is an inspiration.”

RECEPTION: The movie will be preceded by a VIP gathering open to the public with light refreshments and exhibits at 1 p.m.

ABOUT SAFELAWNS.ORG: SafeLawns.org is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to reduction in the use of lawn and garden pesticides and synthetic chemical fertilizers. It has produced a series of high-profile campaigns since its inception in 2006.

ABOUT CT NOFA: The Connecticut Chapter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association has been educating for and promoting organic approaches to farming and gardening since 1982. Its Organic Land Care Program was the first in the country to develop Standards for Organic Land Care and an accreditation program for land care professionals. The Program has trained more than 1,000 landscapers in organic methods and is the model for programs developed by Oregon Tilth and by New York State. Visit www.organiclandcare.net for more information about the Organic Land Care Program and www.ctnofa.org for more information about CT NOFA and its year round educational programs.

FOR TICKETS OR TO MAKE A DONATION: Visit www.ctnofa.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact Scott Reil at helpfulgardener@gmail.com. To view a movie trailer, visit www.ChemicalReactionMovie.com.