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For Immediate Release:

MYTH BUSTING: Are Lawns a Waste of Time and Money

Anti-Turfgrass Statements

- * **23 million acres of grass in the U.S. is too much grass!**
- * **\$25 billion spent on lawns annually is excessive!**
- * **Lawn care takes too much of our time, we're slaves to grass!**

The Real Grass Facts

1. **TURF'S PLACE IN LAND-USE:** Turfgrass is more than just an eye-appealing, home lawn feature. It's essential to parks and playgrounds, golf courses and sports fields and to improve commercial property. It also provides these important environmental benefits: **Functional** — soil erosion control, dust prevention, heat dissipation, noise abatement, glare reduction, air pollution control and nuisance animal reduction; **Recreational** — low cost surface, physical health, mental health, safety and spectator entertainment; **Aesthetics** — quality of life, social harmony, community pride, increased property values and compliments to trees, shrubs and other plants.

Reducing the total amount of turfgrass in the U.S. and elsewhere will not have a positive effect on our environment or quality of life, in fact, just the opposite is most likely.

2. **INVESTING IN TURF CARE:** The Lawn Institute's estimate of \$25 billion spent on lawn care includes *all forms* of turfgrass management and maintenance, not just homelawns. The 1995 National Gardening Association's (NGA) Gallup survey (coincidentally) reports \$25 billion spent on lawn and garden care, *combined*. The NGA reports that just \$166 is spent annually, by those households that do take care of their lawn, that totals \$8.4 billion dollars. By contrast, it is

estimated that Americans spend at least \$500 billion annually on various forms of legalized gambling!

3. TURF'S MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS: Most homeowners find that mowing is the most consistent and time-consuming aspect of lawn care because only one-third apply fertilizers and pesticides, although more do water the grass. However, mowing a home lawn of 10,000 square feet, with a 19-inch mower takes on average just 30-minutes. Mowing once a week for a seven-month growing season totals only 11 hours each year. Large, 60-inch, commercial mowers can easily cut 30 square feet a second, at even half that efficiency, and mowing 15 times a year, large areas require only one second per square foot, per year!

For low maintenance, little else compares to live turfgrass.

Myth-Busting Conclusions

1. Turfgrass is a low cost, high return investment that improves our environment.
2. Use of turfgrass should be strongly encouraged.

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