



ELIMINATE DALTON MCGUINTY'S PESTICIDE BAN

A FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO 2011 ELECTION PLANK

In 2009, Dalton McGuinty's Liberals introduced a ban on lawn and garden pesticides. Since that time, ragweed, dandelions, grubs, and a host of other pests have been destroying Ontario lawns. Aphids and other organisms have been destroying gardens.

The ban was not imposed because of science proving that their proper use harms humans. To the contrary, the products banned by the McGuinty government are approved for home use by Health Canada. The ban was imposed anyway.

The reason for imposing the ban is as simple as it is irrational. Ontario's Environment Minister explained the reason as follows:

"Health Canada never says whether or not a particular product or ingredient is safe. All they say is that there's not an unnecessary risk. What we're concerned about - what all of those in the environmental community are concerned about - is the cumulative effect of all of these various products that have been used on our lawns, our back yards, our front yards, in playgrounds and in parks. That's what this is all about.

[...]

Nobody knows exactly what the long-term health effect of these products together is. That's why we're doing it. In order to protect the health and welfare particularly of our young children that are likely to play on the various lawns and parks of this province. That's who this is all about. It's based on good science." - Ontario Legislature *Hansard*, June 18, 2008.

Read that *closely*. According to the Minister, despite all of the "good science", "*nobody knows*" what the effects of the pesticides are. In other words: the McGuinty government banned pesticides without any scientific evidence that they are harmful to human health.

Why did they do it? To pander to "the environmental community".

The Liberals' pesticide ban is a textbook case of *irrational* governmental decision making. Government ought never to ban something for which there is no scientific evidence of harm. Irrational fears of imaginary harm - fears based not on knowing, but on ignorance - are not an acceptable basis for imposing bans, fines or threats of imprisonment on the buyers and sellers of lawn and garden care products approved by Health Canada.

It is irrational, wrong, and anti-scientific to ban something until it is proven safe. Almost everything might one day be shown to be harmful if used for certain purposes, or in certain quantities and concentrations. That does not mean that it is right for the government to ban almost everything.

It is inappropriate for a government to ban something for fear that someone might use it wrongly or in the wrong quantity. One can kill oneself by drinking gasoline, but we would not want the purchase or sale of gasoline to be banned for that reason. Similarly, one can kill oneself by drinking too much water, yet it would be homicidal to ban the drinking of water.

Freedom Party opposes the imposition of bans for irrational, unscientific, fear-driven, or vote-buying reasons. **A Freedom government will eliminate Dalton McGuinty's 2009 pesticide ban.** Ontario will have healthy, beautiful lawns and gardens again.

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