



A nation of innocents

Yet again the green industry has been called out and forced to defend itself from critics.

As we return to center ring, there are plenty of reasons to feel confident. We carry all the muscle that can be mustered through exhaustive research, EPA approval, and high-powered public relations. And, after all, aren't we the ones who rid the world of the bugs and fungi that have for centuries pointed a loaded gun at the temple of a hungry civilization?

But what happens? A few short, sharp jabs to the midsection from the parents of apple-eating children; a looping right from anti-field burning zealots; and—lastly—a quick combination from Ralph Nader and company.

We're on the ropes, and our legs are weakening...but we won't fall.

We won't fall because we know what we do is a good thing. The world is a better place because we do it. If you need to be reminded of that, stroll through the produce section of your local grocer. Look around: there's plenty for everybody. Go to a New York hospital and try to talk to a withering victim of Lyme disease. Your industry is waging the war on the tick spreading it. Famine, plague: biblical icons with no relevance in this, the land of milk and honey.

We will recover in this battle. And when we do, we'd be wise to not return blows. Keep in mind that the fighter in the other corner is not a bloodthirsty thug seeking our kayo. (That type is in fact a small minority, well-practiced in the art of media manipulation.) Mostly, the fighter across the ring is made up of people who want their children to enjoy long, healthy lives. Parents who sit up at night worrying about how to protect them from crack, war, and the Ted Bundys that may still be out there. It is people forced to come to terms with acid in rain and death in sex. They've seen astronauts incinerated in the Florida sky and the last remnants of the America's frontier choked by millions of gallons of muck.

Let's not give them reason to worry about seemingly innocent things like their lawn and apple juice. And if they do, let's not respond with a fist, but extend a hand of understanding.

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