



## **Kick off a lucky New Year with affordable food**

**By Agri-Pulse Staff**

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Washington, Dec. 31 – In their own versions of Times Square festivities, many countries and cultures around the world will celebrate the arrival of 2010 with food and lucky meals. From eating 12 grapes at the stroke of midnight in Spain and Mexico, to dining on herring in Scandinavia, food often serves as a way to bring good luck starting New Year's Day. This good luck begins, says CropLife America (CLA) which represents crop protection product manufacturers, with "the developers, manufacturers, formulators and distributors of plant science solutions for agriculture and pest management." CLA points out its member companies' pesticides and biotech advances "help to keep an abundant food supply and low costs, so revelers can kick off a lucky new year with an affordable meal."

As an example of the vital role played by crop protection products, CLA notes that it is a popular tradition in the American South to eat collards and black-eyed peas on New Year's Day, which is often considered a lucky meal. Collards currently grow on over 11,000 acres, creating 168 million pounds of crop valued at \$36,000,000. Mostly produced in Georgia, Alabama, California, North Carolina and South Carolina, collards are often impacted by diseases such a black rot and downy mildew which, if not treated, can result in 100% crop loss for farmers.

Yet with the responsible application of crop protection products, much of the yield can be saved and farmers can maintain a solid supply of the leafy vegetable. To ensure maximum production, 78% of all acres of collards are treated with fungicides, resulting in 65% of the American yield being attributed to crop protection technologies.

"The figures yet again demonstrate the impact that crop protection has on the yield of American crops and its valuable use to farmers and consumers alike," says Jay Vroom, CLA's president and CEO. "These innovative products are integral to the agricultural community and the everyday benefits are often overlooked. It is not just some extra luck in 2010 which will keep food prices low, but modern agriculture to help keep America fed."

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