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The University of Dayton

UD TEAMS UP WITH O.M. SCOTT & SONS
TO DEVELOP SAFER, MORE EFFICIENT FERTILIZERS

DAYTON, Ohio, February 17, 1988—Engineers at the University of Dayton are working with researchers from a fertilizer manufacturing company in Marysville to develop a safer, less expensive fertilizer using a concept popularized by modern medicine: time-release capsules.

UD and O.M. Scott & Sons are developing a biodegradable polymer coating for fertilizers that will allow nutrients to be slowly released into the soil, decreasing the risk to human health and the environment.

The year-long encapsulation feasibility study is being funded by a $50,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Development's Edison Seed Development Fund and $56,000 from O.M. Scott & Sons, the country's leading producer and marketer of lawn and garden products.

O.M. Scott & Sons currently markets a fertilizer pellet coated with sulfur to help slow the release of nutrients, but "plastic offers a much more accurate time-release mechanism," said Richard P. Chartoff, professor of materials engineering and head of basic and applied polymer research at UD. Chartoff, of Cincinnati, is principal investigator for the innovative project.

"The potential commercial application of polymer encapsulation is immense," Chartoff said. "The U.S. fertilizer and pesticide markets are currently estimated at $20 billion annually."

For more information on the project, contact Richard Chartoff at (513) 229-2517.

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