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**For Immediate Release**

## **Verdesian Life Sciences Announces Appointment of New CEO**

*Kenneth M. Avery Named Chief Executive Officer*

**CARY, N.C. (September 19, 2016)** – Verdesian Life Sciences, a plant health and nutrition company, today announced that its board of directors has named Kenneth M. Avery chief executive officer effective Monday, September 19. Avery succeeds Verdesian CEO J.J. Grow who will move into a new role as chairman of the Verdesian board of directors. Avery will report directly to Grow.

“Kenny is a dynamic leader who challenges teams and expectations to help companies grow and succeed in diverse global marketplaces,” said Grow. “He has shown that he can successfully bring people together to enhance operational efficiency, implement new customer-centric approaches and improve pipeline commercialization – all areas of opportunity and growth for Verdesian in the coming years.”

Avery has led transformation in teams across global agricultural organizations, most recently during his nearly 10 years with Monsanto, the world’s largest vegetable seed business, in his role as vice president and head of global vegetables.

“Verdesian is in a unique position to provide crop nutrient, seed treatment and biological

solutions as well as value creation to farmers across the globe," said Avery. "It takes a culture of adaptability, a customer-centric focus on retailer and distribution partners by providing sound agronomic solutions to farmers, and a clearly defined strategy and execution to move the needle during challenging periods of growth in the agriculture industry. I am looking forward to working with the exceptional teams and people at Verdesian who are already hard at work to bring new technologies and greater value to farmers."

Avery's appointment comes at a time when Verdesian has added strength to its management team with recent appointments in research and development, business development and global positions throughout Europe.

"It takes someone with experience like Kenny's to drive results-oriented business strategy and customer satisfaction," said Grow. "His leadership and direction will position the company well to leverage international potential with technologies that exist in our pipeline."

Grow has served in his capacity as Verdesian CEO for four years, focusing on a period of innovative mergers and acquisitions activity in the plant health and nutrition marketplace. During that time, he has overseen the development of Verdesian as a global leader with a propriety product pipeline that offers farmers solutions to their agronomic challenges that provide both economic and environmental returns.

Avery previously served as vice president of Monsanto's division for global operations, vegetables and Asia row crops, as well as vice president of the company's global business operations, where he drove critical business process redesign efforts across all geographies and divisions and throughout many functions. He also lead the Asia Pacific vegetables division at Monsanto, which is based in Singapore, and served as regional business director and later strategic accounts lead for row crops in the United States.

He served as vice president and chief financial officer at Delta & Pine Land Company. He was a partner with Arthur Andersen LLP in Memphis, Tennessee, from 1990 to 2002, where he primarily served public and large private companies in both auditing and

consulting roles. Avery also provided consultation for startup entities and private companies, and serviced companies in Brazil, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Australia and China.

Avery earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from Mississippi State University and is a certified public accountant.

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#### **About Verdesian Life Sciences**

Built from the ground up in 2012, Verdesian Life Sciences offers farmers and growers the biological, nutritional, seed treatment and inoculant technologies that maximize performance on high-value row crops and specialty crops, as well as turf and ornamental plants.

Plant health is key to higher yields. Verdesian is advancing plant health and nutrition through the development of nutrient management and efficiency technologies, nutritionals and micronutrients, seed treatments and inoculants, crop health chemistry and biologicals, as well soil surfactants for the agriculture, turf and ornamental industries. As a 4Rs Nutrient Stewardship Partner, Verdesian remains committed to the continued research and development of environmentally sustainable products.

With its headquarters in Cary, North Carolina, Verdesian has production and manufacturing facilities strategically located in Visalia, California; Pasco, Washington; Kentland, Indiana; Cape Girardeau, Missouri; and North Lima, Ohio that produce and custom blend large-scale or small volume runs of liquid and dry formulations.

Further information about Verdesian is available at [vlsci.com](http://vlsci.com).



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