

Press release: Environment Secretary backs further restrictions on neonicotinoid pesticides

Tougher restrictions on neonicotinoid pesticides are justified by the growing weight of scientific evidence they are harmful to bees and other pollinators, Environment Secretary Michael Gove said today.

Setting out the UK's position, the Secretary of State said the UK supports further restrictions on the use of these pesticides. Unless the scientific evidence changes, the government will maintain these increased restrictions post-Brexit.

This follows advice from the [UK government's advisory body on pesticides](#) which said scientific evidence now suggests the environmental risks posed by neonicotinoids – particularly to our bees and pollinators – are greater than previously understood, supporting the case for further restrictions.

Research estimates the value of the UK's 1,500 species of pollinators to crops at £400-680million per year due to improved productivity.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

I have set out our vision for a Green Brexit in which environmental standards are not only maintained but enhanced.

I've always been clear I will be led by the science on this matter. The weight of evidence now shows the risks neonicotinoids pose to our environment, particularly to the bees and other pollinators which play such a key part in our £100bn food industry, is greater than previously understood. I believe this justifies further restrictions on their use. We cannot afford to put our pollinator populations at risk.

I recognise the impact further restrictions will have on farmers and I am keen to work with them to explore alternative approaches both now and as we design a new agricultural policy outside the European Union.

Since December 2013, the EU has banned the use of three neonicotinoids – Clothianidin, Imidacloprid and Thiamethoxam – on a number of crops attractive to bees, such as oilseed rape.

The European Commission has proposed restricting the same three neonicotinoids to only allow their use on plants in glasshouses. Currently, their use is banned for oilseed rape, spring cereals and sprays for winter cereals, but they can be used to treat sugar beet and as seed treatments for

winter cereals.

Should this proposal be adopted, the UK would have the right to consider emergency authorisations. We would only do so in exceptional circumstances where there is a real need for the products and the risk to bees and other pollinators is sufficiently low.

Defra's Chief Scientific Advisor Professor Ian Boyd said:

The important question is whether neonicotinoid use results in harmful effects on populations of bees and other pollinators as a whole.

Recent field-based experiments have suggested these effects could exist. In combination with the observation of widespread and increasing use of these chemicals, the available evidence justifies taking further steps to restrict the use of neonicotinoids.

Defra has today also given an update on its [National Pollinator Strategy](#), which shows encouraging progress on its aims to make farms, towns, cities and the countryside better places for our bees and pollinators.

The strategy was launched in 2014, following independent research which showed an overall decline in the UK's wild bee diversity over the last 50 years. It sets out a collaborative plan to improve the state of bees and other pollinators, and recognises pesticides as one of the key threats to their populations. The government will continue to work with partners such as Friends of the Earth, British Beekeepers' Association and Kew to deliver the ambitious strategy.

[Notice: N & M Sizer Limited: application made to abstract water](#)

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
 - which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
 - when you need to comment by
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[National Statistics: Timber price indices: data to September 2017](#)

This release is published twice a year and comprises two price indices, the Coniferous Standing Sales Price Index and the Softwood Sawlog Price Index. Both indices are based on sales of softwood (conifers) and cover sales in England and Scotland by the Forestry Commission, and sales in Wales by Natural Resources Wales.

[Press release: Nottingham man arrested in connection with Walesby Fire](#)

A 41-year-old man was today (Wednesday Nov 8) arrested for questioning in relation to a fire which burned for over two weeks on a farm near Walesby in north Nottinghamshire last September.

He was arrested in a joint operation involving officers from the Environment Agency and Nottinghamshire Police.

He is being questioned in connection to a fire at Oakfield Farm, in Forest Lane, Walesby, which contained dumped illegal waste.

No permit existed for waste to be stored on the farm.

The man from the Sneinton area of Nottingham was also answering questions about two other enquiries following the discovery of illegal waste at a site on Hatherware Industrial Estate in Loughborough and a farm in Leicestershire.

When officers entered the property in Sneinton they discovered around 40 suspected cannabis plants. The man is also being questioned over this matter.

Peter Haslock, Area Enforcement Team Leader for the East Midlands, said:

The arrest was made as part of a joint investigation involving enforcement officers from the Environment Agency and colleagues from Nottinghamshire Police.

We know the Walesby site did not have a permit for waste activity and we believe the waste was involved in the fire.

These are extremely serious cases and the Environment Agency is determined to bring the culprits to justice.

We are working closely with partners to share intelligence on illegal waste activity. And we're encouraging property and land owners to be vigilant.

Anyone who sees waste crime taking place is advised not to approach as these people can be dangerous.

Report it by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Advice to land and property owners:

- Check any empty land and property regularly and make sure it is secure.
- Carry out rigorous checks on prospective and new tenants. Land and property owners have a responsibility to ensure anyone leasing their land/property complies with regulations. They may be committing an offence by allowing waste to be stored on land or property without the relevant permissions and could leave them liable to prosecution
- Be vigilant and report any unusual behaviour.

Notice: M17 1PA, Cargill plc: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish surrenders that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the surrender notice, decision document and site condition report evaluation template for:

- Operator name: Cargill plc
- Installation name: Trafford Park Wheat Milling Plant
- Permit number: EPR/BM0117IJ/S006