



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

From George Eustice MP
Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

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Dear Mark

Thank you for your letter of 12 April to the Secretary of State on behalf of a number of your constituents about bees, neonicotinoids and the recent applications from the National Farmers Union (NFU) for emergency authorisation of Cruiser OSR and Modesto. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

Pollinators are an essential part of our environment and play a crucial role in food production. The National Pollinator Strategy (NPS) highlights that everyone, be they landowners, land managers, councils or window-box gardeners, can do their bit for pollinators. The NPS can be accessed at www.gov.uk.

Pesticide active substances are currently assessed at EU level and are only approved if they meet safety requirements. The UK is responsible for authorising products containing approved active substances. For this we carry out a thorough assessment of the scientific evidence. Risks to bees are a key part of the assessment carried out before products are authorised. The regulatory regime also provides for regular reviews to take account of the latest information and scientific knowledge. The UK Government has implemented EU restrictions on neonicotinoids in full. Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the EU and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force.

The NFU recently submitted two applications to the Health and Safety Executive for emergency authorisation of neonicotinoid seed treatments on oilseed rape against insect pests. The Government's independent advisers, the UK Expert Committee on Pesticides (ECP) met to discuss this on 11 April and has advised that the applications do not meet the requirements for emergency authorisation. Accordingly, based on the evidence and the expert advice, I have rejected the applications.

GEORGE EUSTICE MP