



## Press Release

16th January 2013

**Brussels**

### **EFSA shows high risks for bees from neonicotinoids; Commissioner Borg to immediately withdraw these bee killing pesticides from the market**

Food Authority EFSA concluded today that seed-coating with the pesticides Imidacloprid, Thiamethoxam and Clothianidin -all neonicotinoid insecticides- poses a high direct risk to bees from crops producing nectar and pollen such as sunflowers, oilseed rape and cotton. Another high direct risk for bees comes from dust dispersal during sawing of cereals, maize, oilseed rape and cotton coated-seeds. EFSA was mandated by Commission health Directorate SANCO to do a full review of the neonicotinoids (art.12 procedure) given the many publications in scientific literature on harm for bees.

Additionally EFSA concludes to a long list of data gaps on chronic and sublethal effects, on the risks for bumblebees and solitary bees, the risks in succeeding crops, the risk posed by honeydew (produced by sucking insects feeding on the plants), the risks of guttation (exsudation fluid produced by plants and drunk by bees). EFSA in this case considered the many publications on bee damage as not conclusive, weighing the studies from pesticide companies who generally conclude to no harm against the studies from the academic world showing many times harm.

Despite the fact that EFSA does not take into account the latest independent scientific publications and still mainly relies on figures provided by the industry, the conclusions of the Authority are still appalling: neonicotinoid insecticides are used in agriculture despite high risk posed to honeybees and enormous lack of safety information to pollinators.

PAN Europe urges Commissioner Borg to immediately propose a withdrawal of the neonicotinoids to the Standing Committee of pesticides (composed of Member State representatives) given the high risks and the many data gaps. Legally Mr. Borg has no other option since the pesticide Regulation 1107/2009 requires good evidence that no unacceptable effects for bees are posed. This evidence is lacking; on the contrary EFSA concludes to high risks.

If Mr. Borg will not act soon to protect bees, PAN Europe will consider going to court to ask for a full ban on neonicotinoids.

### **Further information**

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