

[News story: Further restrictions on neonicotinoids agreed](#)

Further restrictions on neonicotinoid pesticides have been approved following a vote by EU member states today.

The UK voted in favour of the proposals that will see a ban on outdoor use of three neonicotinoids – Clothianidin, Imidacloprid and Thiamethoxam.

Currently, their use is banned for oilseed rape, spring cereals and sprays for winter cereals, but they can be used to treat sugar beet, various horticultural crops and as seed treatments for winter cereals.

In November last year the Environment Secretary Michael Gove said [tougher restrictions on neonicotinoids are justified](#) by the growing weight of scientific evidence they are harmful to bees and other pollinators.

This followed 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 £400-680 million per year due to improved productivity.

A Defra spokesperson said:

We are committed to enhancing our environment for the next generation, and welcome the vote today in support of further restrictions on neonicotinoids.

The Government has always been clear we will be led by the science on this matter. The weight of evidence now shows the risks neonicotinoids may pose to our environment, particularly to the bees and other pollinators is greater than previously understood.

We recognise the impact a ban will have on farmers and will continue to work with them to explore alternative approaches as we design a new agricultural policy outside the European Union.

The current restrictions will stay in place until the new measures comes into force following a phasing out period of around eight months, giving farmers and businesses time to adjust.

Unless the scientific evidence changes, the government will maintain these increased restrictions post-Brexit.

The UK reserves the right to consider emergency authorisations. We will only

do so where there is a real need for the products and the risk to bees and other pollinators is sufficiently low.