



April 19th 2013

**Ask your minister to save Europe's bees!
Do your bit to make sure they do theirs.**

The European Commission has proposed a **ban on the use of neonicotinoids** for an initial 2 year period. This move is a step in the right direction **to save our bees and ensure good food and good farming in Europe.**

During the **first vote** on this ban on March 15th 2013, **no majority decision was reached** by the national ministers for agriculture from the different EU member states.

On April 29th, the ministers are set to **vote again** in an attempt to reach a final decision.

**You still have time to influence them:
Email your minister today to encourage them to make the right decision on April 29th.**

Below you can find the outcome of the first vote:

Abstention	In favour	Against
 FI, UK, DE, EE, BG	 SE, SI, DK, PL, LUX, NL FR, ES, DK, CY, BE, IT, LV, MT	 SK, RO, PT, AT HU, IE, LT, CZ, EL
120 votes	150 votes	80 votes
<p>Click on your country to encourage your minister to support the ban! Silence solves nothing.</p>	<p>Click on your country to congratulate your minister for supporting the ban and to encourage them to stay on that course.</p>	<p>Click on your country to convince your minister to change their mind!</p>

Background

- Europe's food safety watchdog (EFSA) has recently classified neonicotinoids, nerve-agent pesticides, as a high risk to bees and the environment. You can access EFSA's comprehensive study at: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/130116.htm>
- Due to EFSA's findings, the European Commission (DG Health and Consumers) has proposed to ban the 3 most dangerous neonicotinoids for an initial period of 2 years from July 1st 2013.
- A first vote on March 15th 2013 did not lead to a qualified majority and decision, with some countries supporting the ban and others rejecting it. http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/neonicotinoids_en.htm
- The national ministers for agriculture are now due to vote again so as to reach a final decision on April 29th 2013.

Why it is vital to support the Commission's ban proposal

1. An immediate ban is *important* because nerve-agent pesticides (neonicotinoids) are dangerous. They are dangerous to the environment, contaminating water and soil, and finding their way into the nectar, pollen and sap of plants, where they poison pollinating insects such as bees. One of the reasons why neonicotinoids present a particular concern is that they persist in the soil and water for several years and can accumulate in pollinators, leading to their death. In this way, they have bad effects on the whole ecosystem because animals which are not the targets of the pesticide die either through direct exposure or through long term accumulation. Find out more at: <http://bee-life.eu/en/doc/445/> (EN) <http://bee-life.eu/fr/doc/445/> (FR)

2. An immediate ban is *timely* as the risks of neonicotinoids to bees and other pollinators have now been officially recognised by ESFA on the basis of a large volume of independent and scientific research.

3. An immediate ban of neonicotinoids is *possible* because farming does not depend on the use of neonicotinoids. For examples of bee friendly non-chemical alternatives which do not impact on productivity visit <http://bee-life.eu/en/dossier/576/>

4. You writing to your minister asking for an immediate ban of neonicotinoids is *necessary* to counteract the lobby of pesticide producers and their cronies. They continue to attempt to legitimise the use of neonicotinoids by misleading decision-makers and citizens using pseudo-science and claiming that a ban would result in bad harvests and unemployment. France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia suffered no such losses as a consequence of banning the use of certain neonicotinoids, and the economic value of pollination far outweighs the industry estimates.
<http://corporateeurope.org/publications/pesticides-against-pollinators>
<http://www.pan-europe.info/Resources/Briefings/PAN%20Europe%20opinion%20on%20Humboldt%20report%202013.pdf>

5. An immediate ban of neonicotinoids is the *future* as it sets the course for a more sustainable agriculture that ensures a viable outlook for farmers, beekeepers, producers and consumers. Access here a report by Greenpeace <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/publications/Campaign-reports/Agriculture/Bees-in-Delay/>

6. An immediate ban of neonicotinoids is *democratic* because it is being called for by citizens across Europe:

- **2.5 million EU citizens** have signed an AVAAZ petition **asking for a ban** http://www.avaaz.org/en/hours_to_save_the_bees/
- Following the huge **public outcry** in the UK, **large garden centre chains** have recently **stopped selling pesticide products based on neonicotinoids**, and **supermarkets** have **stopped buying products produced using neonicotinoids**.
- **1.5 million UK citizens** have written to their responsible minister, asking him to **vote in favour of a neonicotinoid ban**. This number is increasing by the hour: <http://www.38degrees.org.uk/page/s/ban-the-pesticides-that-are-harming-our-bees#>
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