

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
Westminster
London
SW1A 2AA

March 25th 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

It is with the utmost urgency that we write to call on you to prohibit any future emergency derogations of the bee-killing neonicotinoid Cruiser SB (thiamethoxam), and instead, that the Government ensure the use of non-toxic alternatives, providing adequate support for UK farming and to protect pollinators from irreparable damage.

The Government's decision to reintroduce the pesticide in the case of the sugar beet crop to control virus-spreading aphids goes directly against the guidance of Government expert advisors, who recommended the application be refused due to the unacceptable risks to bees and other pollinators.

The weight of scientific evidence, which informed the bans across the UK and EU, shows that, in addition to being destructive to pollinators, neonics also damage rivers, contaminate the environment through soil and groundwater, and play a direct role in the dramatic decline of our precious bee species.

The facts are frightening but the impacts are preventable with steadfast legislation that safeguards bees and pollinators, along with investment in nature-friendly pest management solutions to ensure that farmers can transition from using neonics to sustainable replacements without the risk of their crops – and livelihoods – becoming threatened when situations like these arise.

We are incredibly concerned about the devastating effects of pesticide use on wildlife, people and the planet. In 2011, together with Friends of the Earth and other bee-friendly charities, we delivered to No. 10 a petition signed by 117,000 to ban neonicotinoids in the UK. We continue to support charities that help to save bees and their habitats, and work with the Soil Association, among others, to certify our products independently and ensure that the best, most sustainable trading practices are maintained.

As a collective of environmentally conscious businesses and organisations, we are doing our part. Now, we are calling on the Government to implement a total ban on neonicotinoids in the UK under any circumstance.

Ignoring the long-term effects of pesticides has grave and permanent consequences. Furthermore, granting their use works directly against the Government's own legal requirement to halt species loss by 2030, as set out in the Environment Act in 2021.

The impact of the ban lift reaches further than our precious bee species; it undermines wider goals to become a nature-positive country.

Yours sincerely,

Anabel Kindersley
Co-Owner Neal's Yard Remedies