

## As EU pesticide ban to 'save bees' backfires, focus of failure turns to activist politicians

Within only 10 months of the precautionary ban on neonicotinoid pesticides, farmers in the UK are reporting significant crop losses for canola due to an infestation of cabbage stem flea beetles ravaging the British countryside. With canola crop losses this year estimated to [between 20-50 percent](#), it is known that seeds treated with neonicotinoids (banned in the EU since December, 2013) would have efficiently controlled those predators.

In what should have been a perfect growing season, some [canola crops in Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire have been totally written off](#) as the flea beetles continue to munch away and multiply. Farmers had been trying to save their crops spraying pyrethroids on their fields every couple days, but these older pyrethroids are nowhere near as effective as the banned neonics and [much harsher on the environment \(and bees\)](#). DEFRA in the UK has just given emergency authorisation to spray neonicotinoids on oilseed rape – a temporary measure under the conditions of the ban, not as effective as seed treated neonics and a good example of a member state recognising the stupidity of the ban. Sadly, it is likely to be too little, too late.

Who is to blame for this precautionary disaster? Not the activist NGOs – they are paid to push the envelope and want to believe the things they tell each other (even if the science says otherwise). Rather, it comes down to the activist(s) in the European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Consumers who pushed for precaution on neonicotinoids within the shortest period in the history of precautionary principle abuse. There was no proper impact assessment done, no consultation, no panel of experts (EFSA was forced to neuter its scientific committee of any experts having ever worked with bees, because of industry associations ... which we are told is a bad thing). Warnings were very clearly and loudly voiced in 2013, especially concerning the risk of the flea beetle on canola viability, but Commission officials disgracefully refused to listen – the anti-chemicals activists were running a much louder lobbying campaign.

**Read full, original article:** The “Save the Bees” Ban: Failed Crops and another Precautionary Fail: Who is to Blame?