

Decisions about neonicotinoids should be ‘science-driven not ‘activist-driven’

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Neonicotinoid pesticide use is again being blamed for the declining populations of specific pollinators, an assertion that Jon Entine, executive director of the Genetic Literacy Project, calls “overblown.”

“This is a complicated issue and there is room for robust debate around this topic,” Entine, who is also the senior fellow at the World Food Center Institute for Food and Agricultural Literacy at the University of California-Davis, told *Crop Protection News*. “However, neonics have become controversial because the issue has been inflamed by a small number of activists.”

Neonics — the most common name for such pesticides — are a class of neuro-active insecticides that are chemically similar to nicotine. In products used widely around the world for about 20 years, neonics are neurotoxins used as active ingredients in pesticides. They work in the seed treatment of crops and coats the seeds planted by farmers, who then don’t have to spray pesticides and decrease the collateral damage to good insects and to the soil, Entine said. . .

However, during the last decade, scientists linked the use of neonics to a condition now referred to as honey-bee colony collapse disorder. . . Similar claims have been made by anti-pesticide activists, anti-chemical groups and environmentalists, Entine said.

And the timeframe – which shows that bee populations were declining in the late ’70s, 20 years before neonics were introduced – proves these activists wrong, Entine said.

Because pollinator health, particularly of the honey bee, is so extremely important for agriculture, Entine said any decisions regarding neonics must be “science-driven” and not “activist-driven.”

Read full, original post: [Expert says neonics decisions must be driven by science, not activism](#)