

## EU neonicotinoid insecticide ban, Brexit prompt some UK farmers to grow less risky crops to protect yields

The [UK] Paterson Farming Partnership is a joint venture between Worstead Farms, run by brothers Gavin, Bruce and Alex Paterson, and Bindwell Ltd, run by their second cousin Luke Paterson.

The neighboring farms....have stopped growing any wheat, barley, oilseed rape and sugar beet, after winning a contract to grow 980 hectares of maize and rye for the anaerobic digestion (AD) power plant at nearby Scottow.

Luke Paterson....said growing a crop with known costs and a guaranteed pricing structure on a five-year deal gave the business more long-term stability to cope with the future uncertainties of Brexit and the phasing out of direct payment subsidies.

In particular, he said the loss of crop protection chemicals such as neonicotinoid pesticides – banned by the EU due to concerns over their impact on bees – increased the financial risk of growing oilseed rape and sugar beet.

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“We were looking at our cropping and we didn’t know what the currency risks are going to be in the future, or whether tariffs will be imposed [after Brexit]. There is also the removal of crop protection products and the effect of that on yield is unknown.

“With neonicotinoids going, rapeseed is now high risk, and sugar beet is looking very high risk because of virus yellows....”

**Read full, original article:** Norfolk farms stop growing wheat, barley and sugar beet – to focus on energy crops instead