

Pesticides: MEPs want to promote use of natural alternatives

Although fast and effective for plant growth, chemicals pesticides entail potential risks for human health, animals and the environment. About 45% of food we consume contains pesticide residues with 1.6% exceeding legal limits, according to the European Food Safety Authority. MEPs want to promote the use of more natural pesticides and to simplify and speed up the approval process. Check our video for more information.

On 15 February MEPs adopted a resolution calling on the European Commission to draw up proposals to fast-track the evaluation, authorisation and registration of low-risk pesticides. So far only seven active substances classified as “low risk” alternatives have been approved for use in the EU.

“We are talking about organisms, viruses, bacteria, nematodes that have to go through a process of certification, which is not only very long, but also very expensive,” said Italian EPP member Herbert Dorfmann, member of the agriculture committee and one of the eight authors of the resolution that was adopted.

Some EU countries have refused to authorise these low-risk alternatives because of their perceived lower efficacy, without taking account either of their resource efficiency benefits for organic farming or of the environmental and health costs of other products.

“We use too much ordinary pesticides, which are chemical; which are mostly dangerous; which were designed to kill living subjects. And they are causing damage to our health as well,” said Czech S&D member Pavel Poc, a member of the environment committee and also a co-author of the resolution.

For more information check out our video on pesticides.

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