

# **UK PESTICIDES STRATEGY**

## **A STRATEGY FOR THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS**

**PROGRESS REPORT  
AUGUST 2008**



## Introduction

1. This report summarises progress in developing the Strategy for the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products that has taken place since the last report published in July 2007.
2. The Government undertook to review the content of the Strategy and progress made a year after launch, and regularly thereafter. This is the latest progress report emerging from that undertaking.
3. An updated version of the Strategy was published in May 2008 following a public consultation. The main purpose of this planned update was to extend the scope to ensure the strategy covers protection of human health.

## Purpose

4. The strategy aims to achieve high standards of human and environmental protection against potential risks posed by pesticides whilst maintaining the economic viability of crop production and effective control of pests, weeds and diseases.

Specifically the strategy aims to:

- Protect consumers by minimising risks from pesticides residues in food;
- Protect users and workers by minimising exposure to pesticides;
- Protect residents and bystanders by minimising exposure from spray operations;
- Reduce water pollution caused by pesticides;
- Reduce the impact of pesticides on biodiversity;
- Establish 'best practice' in the use of pesticides in the amenity sector;
- Minimise the risk to users and the environment from amateur pesticide products;
- Maintain the availability of sufficient methods of crop protection particularly for minor crops (and also minor uses on major crops); and
- Encourage the introduction of cost-effective alternative approaches and greater use of integrated crop and pest management.

## Progress

5. 5 existing stakeholder Action Plans Groups (covering: protection of water, biodiversity; availability of products and techniques; and, amenity use, and amateur use) have been developing a large range of activities to deliver these goals. An explanation of activity can be found below. A new Action Plan Group covering protection of human health met for the first time in July 2008.

6. Key developments include:

- Activity not specific to a particular plan
  - Agreement and sign off of all action plans by group members, with focus on implementation and delivery;
  - Issue of the Strategy's R&D e-newsletter 'RADAR' in September 2007. It summarises R & D projects that inform and support the work of the action plans.
- Water Action Plan
  - Continuation of EU review programme and associated national risk assessment processes;
  - Reviewing product usage and advising those responsible for monitoring water quality of potential implications.

- Commencement of review of surface water monitoring arrangements;
  - Identification of UK Biodiversity Action Plan aquatic species and habitats adversely affected by pesticides;
  - Activities to support implementation of Water Framework Directive, including: development of Pollution Reduction Programmes; closer liaison between the EQS setting and pesticide approvals processes; continuation of the Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative and industry measures (such as the VI pilot catchment project, water protection campaigns and associated initiatives) and
  - Review of R&D activities.
- Biodiversity Action Plan
    - Continuation of EU review programme and associated national risk assessment processes;
    - Group members fed into reviews of environmental schemes supporting measures designed to improve biodiversity;
    - Delivery of an R&D project examining the indirect effects of pesticides on birds and biodiversity and development of mitigation measures;
    - Identification of UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats adversely affected by pesticides;
    - Industry continued to promote (largely under auspices of Voluntary Initiative) measures to promote protection of biodiversity; and
    - Review of R&D activities.
- Amenity Use Action Plan
    - Survey of use and user practice and understanding. The Group considered the key messages emerging from the survey and how best to address any shortcomings which were identified;
    - Monitoring product usage within the sector and advising those responsible for monitoring water quality of potential implications;
    - Amenity weed control conference organised, to raise the profile of contract quality control, pesticide regulations and best practice in the sector;
    - Industry development of the 'Amenity Assured' scheme;
    - Group kept updated on the EU-funded InterReg III CleanRegion project on the range of controls for urban weeds; and
    - Review of R&D activities.
- Amateur Use Action Plan
    - Survey of user practice. The Group considered the key messages emerging from the survey and how best to address any shortcomings identified;
    - Development, publication and dissemination of messages about safe use, storage and disposal of garden pesticides (postcards, posters, promotion of messages at shows and garden centres);
    - Improving information available to stakeholders: in particular, relating to loss and approval status of approval for pesticides, as a result of the EU Review programmed, and improving the Garden Home Page of the PSD website; and
    - Assessment of understanding of best practice measures by retailers of garden products and development, by industry, of a new training course for retailers of garden products.
- Availability Action Plan

- Rationalisation of stakeholder bodies covering minor use issues;
  - Protecting 'minor uses' in the regulatory programme whilst minimising risks to the environment and human health by; active participation in the minor use programme; supporting appropriate measures (such as zonal authorisations) in the proposed new marketing and use regulation; ensuring minor uses are covered in measures implementing the maximum residue level regulation; maintaining the off-label recognition scheme; and providing enhanced support to manufacturers of biological products; and
  - Facilitating appropriate contacts between growers and pesticide approval holders.
- Human Health Action Plan
    - The Group's initial meeting considered membership and measures which should be addressed by the action plan.

### **Reporting and review activity**

7. The Pesticides Forum again reviewed the package of measures developed by the Implementation Groups at its February 2008 meeting. It concluded that these measures were appropriate and could deliver the Strategy's goals. The Forum will continue to keep development of the Strategy under review, advising Government and Ministers as appropriate.

8. The Strategy itself will be reviewed in 2012 in line with the anticipated requirements in the Thematic Strategy requiring national action plans to be reviewed every five years. Additionally, PSD will continue to produce regular reviews.

### **Enquiries**

9. If you have any enquiries regarding this report please contact the Pesticides Safety Directorate's Grant Stark, tel: 01904 455983, email: [grant.stark@psd.hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:grant.stark@psd.hse.gsi.gov.uk)

**Pesticides Safety Directorate  
August 2008**