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Pesticide ban would cost £1.6 billion, say farmers

28 October, 2014 | [Andrew Pring](#)

The value of British food production could fall by £1.6 billion and 44,000 jobs in the agriculture supply chain could be axed if new EU pesticide bans come into force, according to a report by farm business consultants [Andersons](#).

The report, commissioned by the [National Farmers Union \(NFU\)](#), the [Agricultural Industries Federation \(AIC\)](#) and the [Crop Protection Association \(CPA\)](#), looked at the economic impact of plant protection products (PPPs) on UK agriculture and the wider economy. It found the production of apples, fresh carrots and frozen peas in the UK is under threat as a result of loss or restricted use of active ingredients in PPPs, which farmers say safeguard healthy growth.

The report also found the UK's farming profit would drop by 36 per cent from current levels, resulting in structural readjustment in the farming industry.

NFU vice president, Guy Smith said: "We have been warning that in the lifetime of the current European Parliament, we would face significant threats to PPPs. This important and timely report has confirmed and added clarity to the negative impacts that losses and restrictions on PPPs would have on UK food production, on farm and throughout the supply chain.

"It is absolutely essential that farmers have regulation that is risk-based and that it follows sound science to ensure the farming sector keeps growing and contributing to the £97 billion UK food and drink industry. For this to happen we need government at both UK and EU level to put British food production at the heart of policy-making across all government departments."

Nick von Westenholz, CPA CEO, said: "The report provides a clear picture of the implications of the flawed system that governs pesticide use in the EU.

"Hopefully European policy-makers will now realise how imperative it is to make a proper

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assessment of risk and impact when they take decisions affecting food production, and to make sure they foster rather than stifle innovation. If not, farmers can no longer expect to benefit from increasingly targeted and effective crop protection products as industry diverts investment away from Europe.”

But [Friends of the Earth](#) branded the report “dangerously misleading” saying it lacked “any credible, independent or peer-reviewed science”. And Georgina Downs, of the [UK Pesticides Campaign](#), said the existing UK policy on pesticides was a “guinea-pig style experiment” on residents, and claimed “pesticides have been approved for years without having first assessed the exposure and risks specifically for residents living in locality of sprayed fields”.

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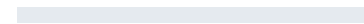
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