

Swiss government rejects vote to ban synthetic pesticides

In February 2019, an initiative to ban the use of synthetic pesticides in Switzerland collected enough signatures to run a referendum entitled 'For a Switzerland, free of synthetic pesticides'.

The initiative would ban the use of all synthetic pesticides in Swiss agriculture and the importation of food or animal feed used commercially that is produced using pesticides. The government would have 10 years to introduce the ban.

As usual, before the referendum goes before Swiss voters, the government looks at the proposal and gives its view on whether it supports it or not. If it is against the proposal, it can put forward a compromise or counter proposal. In this case the National Council, Switzerland's parliament, chose to reject the initiative and all of the suggested counter proposals.

So, the vote will be put to voters in 2020 without the government's support.

Not everyone is pleased with the government's stance. WWF Switzerland said that nature, the environment and drinking water must be protected from highly toxic pesticides and that this is the only way to bring an end to the disappearance of insects and avoid continued soil and waterway pollution. It also thinks the government is out of tune with public opinion and overly influenced by the farming lobby, which is supported by numerous members of parliament.

Those in support of the government's position, such as the Swiss People's Party (UDC/SVP) and the Swiss Farmers' Union (USP), argue that the plan is too restrictive and will make some already struggling farms even more economically unviable. They also argue that progress is being made.

Sales of Glyphosate in Switzerland fell by 31% between 2014 to 2016. Another

case against the ban is that pesticide-based agriculture and the pesticide free sort can coexist, giving people the choice between pesticide and pesticide-free produce.

[Click here to read more on this. \(https://lenews.ch/2019/06/26/government-rejects-vote-to-ban-synthetic-pesticides-in-switzerland/\)](https://lenews.ch/2019/06/26/government-rejects-vote-to-ban-synthetic-pesticides-in-switzerland/)

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