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MEPs put nail in the coffin for sustainable EU pesticides regulation

Today, Members of the European Parliament rejected the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products Regulation (SUR). Cheered on by the big agri industry lobbies, right-wing MEPs together with the far-right, managed to weaken the text in crucial areas. Beyond adopting meaningless reduction targets, they also removed the protection for kindergartens, schools, hospitals, and old people homes, in so-called sensitive areas, and deleted binding rules for integrated pest management, which would have been an important tool to implement sustainable practices in agriculture. In the end, the text was not good enough for anyone to support it. Members of the European Parliament failed to protect human health and the health of our planet.

Sarah Wiener MEP, Greens/EFA MEP and European Parliament rapporteur for the SUR, comments:

“Today, Members of the European Parliament failed to agree on a position on the proposed pesticides regulation. This is a bitter blow for the protection of the environment and public health. To put it bluntly - the majority of MEPs put the profits of big agri over the health of our children and the planet.

“Negotiations have been ongoing for months and we managed to get a strong report in the ENVI committee. But driven by big agri interests, MEPs from the far-right and the right together with some members of Renew and S&D, voted for a report in plenary that ended up being very weak. Especially when it comes to the protection of public health and biodiversity as well as support for farmers. The aim of the SUR is to slash the use of chemical pesticides in half by 2030, but without binding rules for integrated pest management and without monitoring, this is merely greenwashing. It was just not a text that we could in good conscience vote for.

“An unholy alliance of the far-right, conservatives and liberals could smell blood and managed to kill the entire position of the Parliament by also voting against the referral back to committee. This means that trilogue negotiations cannot start and there is not going to be a new sustainable use of pesticides regulation.”

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