

Midlothian Council  
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**BY EMAIL ONLY**



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Dear Councillors

I'm writing to you in my capacity as President of NFU Scotland representing over 8,500 farming, crofting and arable businesses in Scotland. A number of NFU Scotland members have contacted me expressing concern over Midlothian Council's recent decision to temporarily suspend the use of glyphosate across its services while it investigates concerns about its safety.

Plant protection products, including glyphosate, are among the most tightly regulated chemicals in the world. The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has concluded that glyphosate is not a carcinogen and does not cause genetic or reproductive effects. This conclusion followed an extensive review of the available scientific evidence and supports those made by regulatory bodies around the world have looked at the scientific evidence and concluded that glyphosate poses no risk to people when used correctly. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) carried out a review which concluded that glyphosate poses minimal risk to non-target plants and animals when used appropriately. As part of this process, regulatory authorities specifically evaluate the potential for effects on non-target organisms, including bees, and only products that pose no unreasonable risk are approved. Glyphosate is one of the safest plant protection products in the world. These conclusions were consistent with the outcome of other regulatory evaluations of glyphosate around the world, in countries including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Switzerland – all of which supported the conclusion that glyphosate posed no

unacceptable risk when used correctly. This view was also upheld in a joint report from the World Health Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN.

Glyphosate products have been extensively tested in the laboratory and in the field to evaluate potential toxicity to bees. This extensive testing has found that glyphosate products pose no acute or chronic adverse effects to honey bees. For example, a comprehensive study by Thompson et al (2014) found no adverse effects on adult bee survival or bee brood survival or development in honeybee colonies treated with glyphosate at levels that exceed environmentally realistic exposures.

No large-scale study has found any link between glyphosate, colony collapse disorder or other causes of hive losses. Pollinators like honey bees are crucial to helping farmers produce abundant crops. The good news is that global honey bee populations have actually increased by 65 percent since the early 1960s.

I urge that Midlothian Council should deeply consider scientific evidence when considering any decision on the use of glyphosate and other plant protection products. I welcome any further engagement with you on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Andrew McCornick.

Andrew McCornick  
**President, NFU Scotland**