

## 2022 Cruiser SB Neonicotinoid Stewardship Final Report

“Virus Yellows is the single biggest threat to the UK sugar beet sector. In previous years it has led to crop losses of up to 80%, causing catastrophic economic harm to both farming businesses and the UK industry as whole. Without an effective non-chemical control, neonicotinoid seed treatments remain the most effective way to protect the crop through the early stages of development when it is most susceptible to attack from the aphids which carry the disease. Emergency Authorisations for the use of such seed treatments in the short-term have been vital in safeguarding the homegrown sugar beet crop as we continue to invest in the pursuit of long-term, sustainable solutions to the disease.

The commitment of the UK sugar industry to limited and responsible use of Cruiser SB has been key, and, as such, we welcome the publication of this jointly commissioned and jointly funded report into the residues associated with the planting of Cruiser SB treated sugar beet seed in 2022. We are particularly pleased that residue analysis determined that neither thiamethoxam (TMX) nor clothianidin could be quantifiably detected in any of the pollen or vegetation samples on any sampling occasion. This gives confidence that translocation did not occur into the non-target crops and pose a risk to bees, and other sensitive species, within this time frame.

We do, however, note that this constitutes only an interim report, with the broader ambition of the project to monitor the breakdown of clothianidin and TMX residues over time. This multi-year work has already been commissioned by Defra and we look forward to evaluating the results in full upon the conclusion of the study. We welcome the incorporation of a lower limit of quantification whilst recognising that the limit of quantification adopted for the 2022 analysis was taken from standardised Sante guidelines.

In the meantime, the UK sugar beet industry will fund further in-year residue studies, where Cruiser SB is used, to maintain confidence that translocation does not occur into non-target crops. It will also continue its broad portfolio of work, led by the joint industry Virus Yellows Taskforce, pursuing long-term, sustainable solutions to the threat posed by Virus Yellows exploring solutions in seed breeding, Integrated Pest Management, and sustainable spray programmes.”