



BeeFacts

Protective Shield for Bees

Crop protection is strictly regulated

Fields of flowering rapeseed will be visited by bees – and will be treated with crop protection products if necessary. Pollination and secure yields: Farmers need both. At the same time, the beekeeper depends on flowering crops such as rapeseed, fruits or sunflowers. Beekeeping and crop protection must therefore be compatible.

When crop protection products are used to protect crops against detrimental insects, particular care is needed as insecticides can harm bees if not used properly. Building on numerous documents, rules for proper application are set up in the registration process as one important prerequisite for bee safety. Technical principles of registration are highly complex and information is not always easy to find. A compilation of the most important documents – partly in the German language – is therefore available for download on the website www.innovation-naturhaushalt.de.

Registration of a crop protection product consists of different elements:

Experimental examination of a new crop protection product (registration studies)

Two kinds of studies can be distinguished:

- Studies which are conducted in laboratories under standardised conditions and evaluate toxicity of a substance.
- Studies under outdoor conditions which assess under realistic specifications – for example a certain application rate – whether bees will be affected.

Evaluation of results (risk assessment)

The risk assessment is carried out on the basis of the experimental data. It is evaluated whether a product can be registered, whether there is any



Research in a bee hive under outdoor conditions

photo: BASF SE

risk for bees – and if so, which risk – and whether anything can be done to reduce this risk.

Measures to protect bees (risk minimisation)

There are several approaches to reduce the risk for bees. If, for example, a treatment of a crop during flight time of the bees would impose too high a risk on the bees, application outside flight times or a ban of application on open blossoms can be a suitable measure. If such measures are necessary to protect bees, they will be published on the packaging / container of the crop protection product. Following these label instructions is a legal obligation.

Different institutions are involved in the registration process. The proposer, assessment institutes, experts, independent authorities (the European Central Authority EFSA in Parma and the Julius-Kühn-Institute in Germany), the German Federal Environment Agency as well as the German Federal Authority for Consumer Protection and Food Safety.