



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **The National Union of French Beekeeping (UNAF) today announced victory at the Council of State for France, against authorization of the pesticide CRUISER®**

UNAF requested the cancellation of three annual decisions to allow CRUISER 350, and the condemnation of the Ministry of Agriculture, at a Special Public Hearing of the Council of State of France.

The Council of State today, Monday, January 24, 2011 at 14:00 hours, heard three applications from UNAF, presented by their lawyer Bernard Fau, against the authorization decisions of CRUISER 350, that French and European beekeepers have been denouncing for years because of its devastating effects on bees and all pollinators.

At the hearing of the State Council of France, the Special Public Judge, Mr. Edward Geffray, required the annulment of the decisions by which the French Minister of Agriculture authorized Cruiser in 2008, 2009 and 2010. The judge also required the state to pay € 9,000 to a UNAF for the costs of court proceedings.

Said Henri Clement, President of UNAF:

***"GAUCHO, REGENT, CRUISER ... This is too much! Why is it that whenever there is fault we must appeal to judges to punish the unacceptable complacency of policymakers for the agrochemical industry, in violation of the law and to the detriment of our core values of environmental protection? In the context of scandal MEDIATOR [drug from the Merial laboratories suspected of killing hundreds of persons in France], our citizens are frightened witnesses to the disastrous mismanagement of the state facing its oversight role and protection. [Minister of Agriculture of France] Bruno Le Maire, how dare he leave the situation as it is, after authorizing Crusier a few days ago, on millions of acres for the year 2011? I cannot believe it. Neither the French beekeepers, nor public opinion, nor Justice would accept it!"***

The Minister of Agriculture has re-authorized a new short-term approval each year, in violation of laws for agrochemical safety, using as a reference [for Cruiser approval] a German authorization that has finally been withdrawn beyond the Rhine since May 15, 2008. Cruiser is a powerful neurotoxic insecticide treatment of major crops. This product is challenged in the destruction of bees in France and Europe. Since he took over, other [similar pesticides] GAUCHO and REGENT were already banned already after the intervention of the State Council of France. This product is also prohibited in many European countries.

***"The decision of the State Council should put a stop to these practices of unacceptable risk management,"*** Added president Henri Clement, ***"Once again, this case raises the question of independence of expertise within the national agency (the COVE) and the European Agency (EASA) responsible for the assessment of risks. It also raises the issue of trust that citizens should be able to attach to the regular functioning of public authorities."***

**Cruiser ®, active ingredient: thiamethoxam - Family neonicotinoid systemic insecticide neurotoxicity - Manufacturer: Syngenta Agro**

This insecticide is an extremely powerful systemic pesticide, for which an AMM marketing authorization (authorization to the market) was obtained after January 2008, by reference to a German product that [itself was] finally banned on May 15, 2008 beyond the Rhine.

Since then, the Minister of Agriculture has granted [temporary annual] permits year by year despite the uncertainty of the safety of these products. French law and European law require that such permits are granted for ten years, but **only when the certainty of product safety is demonstrated first by the manufacturer.**

This highlights a perverse system akin to a 'jumping flea' in which, in the absence of demonstrated safety, annual permits are issued. This required three legal appeals by UNAF to the State Council of France in 2008, 2009 and 2010 [this recent decision by Judge Edward Geffray for the three registrations]. However, UNAF intends to file a fourth appeal against the decision just taken by the Minister [for the 2011 annual approval of Cruiser].

Since 2008, a monitoring plan for Cruiser® was developed by the Ministry of Agriculture. This plan is very questionable, too, because its protocol which includes the bee, and has never been validated by the monitoring organizations. Interpretation of results by the ANSES (e.g. AFSSA) is more than doubtful. Despite many documented cases of poisoning of bees due to Cruiser®, the Ministry of Agriculture continues, on the advice of the ANSES/Dive, to favor the use of this insecticide to the detriment of beekeeping and wildlife pollination.

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