



BRITISH GROWERS

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WHAT THEY DO BEST

BRITISH GROWERS UPDATE

17 February 2023



The future for Horticulture Crop Protection

Following the demise of AHDB Horticulture, the industry has been obliged to take on the task of processing EAMUs and Emergency Authorisations to ensure the necessary pipeline of plant protection products for the future. The service, currently provided by AHDB, ends at the end of March. Over the last 12 months various people from the industry have been working hard to put in place a new system to continue this vital work once the commitment from AHDB ends.

This work has resulted in the creation of Horticulture Crop Protection Ltd. This is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and owned by its members who are the crop associations. The ownership model is like the model used by British Growers. This ensures the industry has complete control over all its activities.

On 7 February 2023, HCP held its first AGM to elect the following Board of Directors:

- Ali Capper nominated by the Top Fruit sector
- Louise Sutherland nominated by the Berry sector
- Sam Rix nominated by the Onion sector
- Rob Parker nominated by the Salads sector
- Keston Williams nominated from the Field Veg sector
- Derek Wilkinson nominated by the Field Veg sector
- Robin Squance nominated by the Ornamentals sector
- Rob James nominated by the Protected Edibles sector



Funding the EAMU and EA work will be via a voluntary subscription. This will be collected on a crop-by-crop basis through the network of crop associations and other crop /industry specific groups. The cost per business, if everyone pays, will be less than in the past. Each Association is being given the choice of how to collect these funds. Some are opting for an area-based charge while others are looking at a value-based charge. Details of the suggested rates should be available shortly once they are agreed by each crop association. Some crop associations have already reached agreement with their members.

Control of the work undertaken by HCP, the EAMUs and EAs applied for, will rest with the Crop Association. In conjunction with HCP, each Association will be asked to identify its crop protection priorities. This is the model used by Horticulture historically and has worked successfully for many years.

Historically, AHDB Horticulture processed between 80 and 90 applications each year which represents a significant level of activity.

We are currently in the final stages of concluding discussions with the team from AHDB who have been doing this work in recent months, with a view to them joining HCP from April onwards.

We are also in the final stages of concluding discussions with AHDB and Defra for the transfer of the funds left in AHDB Horticulture. These funds will ensure HCP has the necessary cash flow to fund the activity – applications, residue, and efficacy testing – planned for 2023. There is a degree of urgency around this activity because contracts for the testing work have to be in place so trials can start in the spring.

There will be a transfer of funds from Crop Associations to HCP and there is a consensus that HCP needs to start collecting subscriptions from the industry for the 2023 season. It is envisaged that the new rates will be less than the old AHDB levy.

Views about the merits of the wider R&D work were incredibly mixed – some growers found the work useful while others questioned its value. But generally, there was a consensus that the work to ensure growers continue to have access to the widest range of plant protection products was vital and must continue.

After a year of hard work, we now have the basis of an alternative service. If this is to succeed it needs the commitment of all growers, large and small, and across the full spectrum of the crops grown here in the UK.

Further details of subscription rates have been and will be published by each crop association as they are agreed.

Sent on behalf of the Board of Directors of HCP

Jack Ward

February 2023

