



# Raoul Calls For EPA Restrictions On Pesticide Found To Be Toxic To Bees

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**CHICAGO** – Attorney General Kwame Raoul, along with 12 attorneys general, today called for nationwide restrictions on the use of sulfoxaflor, a chemical pesticide that is extremely toxic to bees and other pollinators. The coalition, comprised of some of the nation’s leading agricultural producers, depend on pollinators to sustain their crops and natural ecosystems.

[In a letter](#) to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Raoul and the coalition warned that the unrestricted use of sulfoxaflor could have devastating effects on pollinators, ultimately harming the economy and endangering the nation’s food security. Raoul urged the EPA to adopt reasonable restrictions on sulfoxaflor’s use and support further research into the pesticide’s potential impacts on human health and the environment.

“We must do what we can to protect pollinators, which are critical to Illinois agriculture,” Raoul said. “I am urging the EPA to ensure restrictions on the use of sulfoxaflor are in place to keep Illinois crops and natural ecosystems healthy.”

The EPA previously faced lawsuits challenging its attempts to lift needed restrictions on sulfoxaflor and allow the pesticide’s use in controversial ways — without consulting the public or considering the pesticide’s effects on endangered species. In December 2022, the lawsuits were successful, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit ordered the EPA to immediately correct various legal violations. As a result, in February 2023, the EPA published a notice seeking public comment on the use of sulfoxaflor.

Raoul and the coalition’s letter provides important state input in response to that notice. It asserts that the represented states together produce 37% of the nation’s crops and play a key role in American food security and resilience. Illinois and the coalition states are the leading national producers of a wide variety of crops, such as pumpkins, apples, almonds, lettuce, hops, beets, tomatoes, coffee and oranges. The states also have

extraordinary natural resources and ecosystems, and are home to a variety of threatened and endangered species and critical habitats. All of this relies on pollination by insects such as bees.

To prevent harm to these necessary pollinators, Raoul urges the EPA to:

- Restrict the use of sulfoxaflor when crops are blooming and pollinators are present.
- Reimpose a required buffer zone between sprayed sulfoxaflor and blooming

vegetation.

- Encourage field owner collaboration to ensure sulfoxaflor is not applied before or during a period when managed pollinators are nearby.
- Support further research into sulfoxaflor's impacts on the environment and on humans; remain vigilant about its potential harms.

In issuing the letter to the EPA, Attorney General Raoul joined the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Vermont and Washington.