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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Thursday March 30, 2017

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### **Environmental Groups Call on Jeff Bezos, Amazon, to Remove Pollinator-Toxic Products from Website**

**Washington, D.C.** - Over 30 environmental and public health groups, joined by several environmentally responsible businesses, sent a letter today to Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, urging him to remove products linked to pollinator declines from the retailer's website. Citing federal inertia that has allowed pollinator declines to continue at alarming rates, the groups pointed to the need for action from private companies to combat known threats to pollinators, in this case a class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids.

Neonicotinoid pesticides are found in many home and garden products, and have been determined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to be highly toxic to bees. According to the letter, "independent scientific literature associates the use of bee-toxic pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids, with impaired pollinator health and decline, including reduced populations of native bees, butterflies and other beneficial organisms."

The groups call on Amazon "to use its influence as the largest online retailer in the U.S. to lead marketplace change and protect pollinators by prohibiting the sale of pollinator-toxic neonicotinoid pesticide products, educating consumers on the availability of safer, "pollinator friendly" alternatives."

This ask comes on the heels of last week's decision by the federal government to officially list the rusty patch bumblebee - the first ever bumblebee, and first bee overall in the continental U.S. - as an endangered species. Without swift and meaningful action by companies like Amazon, these environmental groups allege that the rusty patch bumblebee may be the "canary in the coalmine" for larger and further reaching pollinator losses.

“America’s beekeepers continue to experience hive losses of up to 50%, losses that are unsustainable and are driving many beekeepers out of the industry,” said Bonnie Raindrop, Legislative Chair of the Central Maryland Beekeepers Association. “The Big Ag and pesticide lobbies are too influential for us to expect the government to take appropriate action, so we are counting companies like Amazon to step up and lead.”

“With the Trump Administration set on dismantling the EPA, environmental groups and their supporters are turning to the private sector to lead the way on protecting pollinators and the countless ecosystem services they provide,” asserted Jay Feldman, Executive Director of Beyond Pesticides, the organization that led the sign-on letter.

According to Dan Raichel, Staff Attorney at NRDC, “Putting an end to the bee crisis is going to take everyone’s help. Amazon can be a big part of the solution by ensuring that when their shoppers want to beautify their homes and gardens, they aren’t buying products that harm bees.”

“The marketplace is shifting. More than 65 garden retailers have made commitments to restrict the use of bee-killing pesticides on products and plants,” said Tiffany Finck-Haynes, food futures campaigner at Friends of the Earth. “It’s time for Amazon to step-up to the plate and follow other industry leaders by making a commitment to stop selling bee-killing pesticides.”

The groups say removing neonicotinoid pesticide products from Amazon’s website is imperative to protecting natural resources, specifically bees, butterflies and birds, as well as promoting water quality and soil health. By taking action, Amazon would be joining with other retail leaders, such as Home Depot and Lowe’s, that have committed to stop selling neonicotinoid products and treated plants at their stores.

The letter was accompanied by a [product list](#) showing over 100 items sold on Amazon’s website that contain bee-toxic neonicotinoid pesticides.

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