

Media release

Signal for the future: WAK-N paves the way for modern plant protection

Zurich, 20 August 2025. scienceindustries and the Industry Group for Agriculture welcome the fact that the Economic Affairs Committee of the National Council (WAK-N) adopted its draft on Pa.lv. 22.441 Bregy on 18/19 August 2025 for submission to the National Council. With this important decision, the committee is sending a strong signal in favour of modern and effective plant protection in Switzerland. Swift action is needed.

Even today, many crops in Switzerland cannot be adequately protected. However, industry and agriculture need reliable framework conditions to secure harvests. The Bregy parliamentary initiative accelerates the approval of new plant protection products – whether biological or chemical – by making approval in a neighbouring EU country, the Netherlands or Belgium, the basis for a simplified and accelerated approval procedure in Switzerland. This will ensure that modern solutions involving biological and chemical plant protection products are quickly available in Switzerland.

Safety and environmental protection remain guaranteed

At the same time, the procedures remain strictly regulated and Switzerland-specific requirements such as the right of appeal for associations, strict water protection regulations and the possibility of authorising plant protection products exclusively for Switzerland remain untouched. The statement widely reported in the media that the Pa.lv. opens the door to 'dangerous active substances' is therefore incorrect. No plant protection product will be allowed onto the Swiss market without being tested in future. Every plant protection product will still need a company to bear the high costs and expenses and submit an application for authorisation. However, the consideration of EU test reports in the assessment of authorisation dossiers and the adoption of time limits will ensure more efficient processes and shorter procedures.

Revision of the Plant Protection Products Ordinance is not sufficient

On 10 August, the Federal Council also approved the total revision of the Plant Protection Products Ordinance. Scienceindustries and the Industry Group Agriculture welcome the revision as a step in the right direction: it simplifies some processes and brings more transparency. However, by remaining within the framework of existing law, the revision is a missed opportunity to systematically speed up authorisation procedures while safeguarding key Swiss characteristics such as water protection and specific authorisation for Switzerland. This means that the implementation of the Bregy parliamentary initiative remains important and urgent.

Risk-based approaches instead of unrealistic ones

Finally, it should be noted that the 'zero tolerance threshold' for foreign substance residues in groundwater and drinking water, which is often called for in the debate on plant protection products, is neither feasible nor effective in practice. Modern analytical methods can detect even the lowest concentrations. It is crucial that limit and tolerance values are set on a risk-based basis in such a way that they effectively protect people and the environment without creating unnecessary barriers.

With the Bregy parliamentary initiative, Switzerland is speeding up the approval of modern plant protection products, thereby strengthening security of supply without compromising its high standards of environmental and consumer protection.

[For the full statement \(PDF, in German\)](#)

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scienceindustries, the Swiss business association for the chemical, pharmaceutical and life sciences industries, is committed to creating an outstanding international environment for its approximately 250 member companies. The chemical, pharmaceutical and life sciences industries employ around 80,000 people in Switzerland. As Switzerland's largest export industry, it makes a significant contribution to Swiss prosperity.

The **Agricultural Industry Group** brings together specialists in the field of plant protection from BASF, Bayer, Leu+Gygax, Omya, Stähler and Syngenta. The group is committed to innovative and environmentally friendly solutions in the field of plant protection.