



Amenity Forum

Guidance Note

Counterfeit Products



Introduction

Trade in illegal plant protection products (PPPs) involving organised criminal gangs, is increasing around the world. Often originating in Asia, there is a trend towards importing active ingredients or formulations into the European Union (EU) in order to produce unauthorised packaged PPPs intended for illegal sales. In addition, illegal PPPs, ready for sale, are directly imported into the EU.

Illegal PPPs are being passed off as legitimate PPPs, for example as counterfeits/fakes or through misuse of parallel trade permits. This is a dangerous and illicit trade which is damaging to the credibility of the legitimate free movement of authorised products within the EU.

Illegal pesticides are untested and unapproved for sale so they have not complied with the strict safety and quality standards required for product authorisation in Europe.

Genuine PPPs require many years of investment in research, development and testing to prove safety to human health and the environment. This is not the case for illegal products.

Illegal products are unregulated and uncontrolled, so there is no way of knowing what substances they contain. This may pose genuine risks to human and environmental safety, and the whole amenity industry.

Precautions

PPP users are strongly advised to take the following simple precautions to minimise the risks of buying and using illegal pesticides and demonstrate due diligence:

- ❖ Buy only known and reputable products from known and reputable suppliers (including if buying through the internet).
- ❖ Check the accreditation (eg BASIS) of advisers recommending and/or supplying PPPs.
- ❖ Always question unrealistic prices – if in doubt ask your supplier where the product came from.
- ❖ Check that the product detailed on the invoice and delivery note matches the product ordered and delivered.
- ❖ Check that packaging is professional, tamper-proof and securely sealed and it has a full label written in English.
- ❖ If you are familiar with the product, ensure the colour and appearance is as expected. A parallel import should look the same as the UK reference product.
- ❖ If you are told that the product “is the same as X’s” and is a parallel import, ask for confirmation that it was made by company X and ask which country it came from (you could ask what the original product was called).

Reporting

Always report suspicious products and suppliers

Defra Helpline – 08459 33 55 77 (calls charged at local rate)

Further Information

Contacts for further information

Chemicals Regulation Directorate – www.pesticides.gov.uk