

# THE PESTICIDE COLLABORATION

TACKLING PESTICIDES FOR A **HEALTHY FUTURE**

## SUBMISSION TO THE WOMEN'S HEALTH STRATEGY: CALL FOR EVIDENCE

THIS SUBMISSION & RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED & SUPPORTED BY HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT FOCUSED ORGANISATIONS, AS PART OF [THE PESTICIDE COLLABORATION](#)



A Rocha UK; English Organic Forum; First Steps Nutrition Trust; Garden Organic; Greater Manchester Hazards Centre; Hazards Campaign; Landworkers' Alliance; Dr. Helen Lynn; Organic Farmers & Growers; Organic Research Centre; Pesticide Action Network UK; Parkinson's UK; Soil Association; Unite the Union; Women's Environmental Network.

## 5. Research, evidence and data

**Pesticides and their impacts on human health in general and women in particular are poorly understood and largely neglected by UK health bodies.**

It is widely recognised that women, pregnant women and unborn children are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of pesticides. In particular it is known that pesticides can pass through the mother into the unborn child and can also be passed on in breast milk. As an example a study published in 2020 showed that prenatal exposure to pesticides could result in holoprosencephaly (HPE).<sup>1</sup>

Several studies have also shown that exposure to pesticides can elevate the risk of developing cancers, including breast cancer. A study published in 2019 showed a clear correlation between the use of pesticides and elevated cancer risk in women either working in agriculture or living in agricultural areas.<sup>2</sup>

The Pesticide Collaboration is calling on the Department of Health to instigate a number of measures to focus on the potential health impacts of pesticides on women;

- Develop a research programme that will look specifically at linkages between pesticide exposure and chronic health impacts including data disaggregated by sex
- Ensure that all routes of exposure are investigated, including dietary and occupational pesticide exposure
- Undertake studies into the impact of prenatal pesticide exposure on children
- Focus specifically on the impact of pesticide exposure for those that are at highest risk of exposure either through occupation or from residing in agricultural areas.
- Investigate the impact of pesticide exposure for rural residents with a focus on women
- Undertake research into the issue of low-dose and combinatory pesticide exposures with a particular focus on endocrine disrupting pesticides and their subsequent chronic effects on women, and children born to women that have been exposed to pesticides

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1 Addissie, Y.A., Kruszka, P., Troia, A. et al. Prenatal exposure to pesticides and risk for holoprosencephaly: a case-control study. *Environ Health* 19, 65 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-020-00611-z>

2 E, Werder; L, Engel; J, Satagopan; A, Blair; S, Koutros; C, Lerro; M, Alavanja; D, Sandler; L, Beane Freeman. Pesticide use and breast cancer risk among farmers' wives in the Agricultural Health Study *Environmental Epidemiology*: [October 2019 - Volume 3 - Issue - p 112](#)