

# Kroger Urged to Eliminate Bee-Toxic Pesticides from its Food Supply Chain

*Groups urge grocer to save bees from "insect apocalypse" during National Pollinator Week*

CINCINNATI, OHIO, UNITED STATES, June 23, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On the eve of Kroger's (NYSE: KR) annual shareholder meeting, groups are calling on the grocery giant to commit to eliminating toxic pesticides linked to dramatic pollinator declines from the company's food supply chain. This action, organized during National Pollinator Week, is part of a [larger campaign](#) urging Kroger and other top retailers to take urgent action on pesticides and expand organic offerings to protect bees and other pollinators.

Kroger currently lags behind competitors like Costco (NASDAQ: COST), Albertsons (NYSE: ACI) and Giant Eagle. Walmart (NYSE: WMT) recently announced a time-bound commitment, the most far-reaching to date of any U.S.

"Scientists warn we are facing an 'insect apocalypse,' largely driven by toxic pesticides," said Paolo Mutia, Food and Agriculture Campaigner at Friends of the Earth. "Kroger needs to join competitors like Walmart that have established industry-leading policies to protect pollinators essential to its business and to our food system, before it's too late."

Forty percent of invertebrate pollinators face extinction, and research shows that pesticides are a key driver. Research shows that organic farming can help reverse pollinator declines.

Kroger store-brand foods have been [found to contain toxic pesticides](#), including glyphosate, organophosphates, and neonicotinoids. These pesticides are linked to adverse human health impacts and harm to bees and other pollinators. The foods tested were items that kids and families typically eat including cereal, apples, applesauce, spinach and pinto beans.

"I don't want to live in a world without bees. Or strawberries. Or chocolate. Or coffee," said Lacey Kohlmoos, U.S. Campaign Manager at SumOfUs. "And unless Kroger makes a strong commitment to protect bees and other pollinators from extinction, that's very well what may end up happening. It's time for Kroger to finally step up and do its part to save the bees, and our favorite foods and drinks."

Friends of the Earth, along with over 100 environmental, consumer, food safety, farmer and farmworker organizations, have driven hundreds of thousands of emails and calls to Kroger,

organized protests at Kroger's shareholder meetings and grocery stores and placed a billboard outside of Kroger headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio. The coalition includes Friends of the Earth, SumOfUs, Beyond Pesticides, Center for Food Safety, Green America, Herbicide Free Campus, Toxic Free NC, and Kids Right to Know.

"As a major grocer, Kroger is responsible for ensuring that both its customers and the environment are healthy," said Jaydee Hanson, Policy Director at Center for Food Safety. "Its customers want to live in a world where they can delight in the sights and sounds of insects and wildlife. Kroger should make sure its customers have access to healthy, organic foods that benefit human health and are produced without toxic pesticides that harm our bees and ecosystems."

"Food retailers like Kroger have both the responsibility and means to ensure the products they sell are not contributing to the insect apocalypse and the ongoing collapse of biodiversity worldwide," said Drew Toher, Community Resource and Policy Director at Beyond Pesticides. "We urge Kroger to get its house in order: expand its selection of organic foods, and ensure all products sold at its stores are grown in manner that safeguards soil health, pollinators, farmers, and the farmworkers our agricultural system relies upon."

Friends of the Earth's 2020 Bee-Friendly Retailer Scorecard gave Kroger a "D-" rating. The report, which analyzes 25 of the largest U.S. grocery stores, noted that while Kroger has expanded its bee-friendly organic offerings, the company has not taken substantial steps to reduce the sale of pesticides that threaten pollinators in its food and beverage supply chains.

"Toxic pesticides have no place on the food we feed our families," said Alexis Luckey, Executive Director at Toxic Free North Carolina. "We ask Kroger to demonstrate corporate responsibility by influencing its supply chain to transition to healthier and more sustainable growing practices that will protect the health of our community and biodiversity of our precious ecosystem."

"Pollinators as a keystone species are essential to healthy and productive food and ecosystems," said Joyce Kennedy Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator at People and Pollinators Action Network. "Time is of the essence to protect this vital wildlife by eliminating their pesticide exposures."

"Toxic pesticides are harming farmworkers, farmers, pollinators, consumers, and communities nationwide," said Todd Larsen, Executive Co-Director at Green America. "Consumers are increasingly looking for foods that are organic and protect people and the planet. Kroger's sales, profits, and brand will be at risk if it fails to eliminate toxic pesticides from products on its shelves."

"Bees, a vital part of maintaining our eco-systems and food supply are under attack more than ever due to toxic pesticides," said Rachel Parent, Founder and Director at Kids Right to Know. "If Kroger truly cares about its customers, the environment, and the bees they will step up and say

no to bee-toxic pesticides. The young generations are calling for change, now it is time for Kroger to listen!"

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