

Greens Seek Tougher Controls on Pesticides

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June 10, 2008 — THE GREEN Party yesterday reiterated its plea for stricter legislation regarding the sale and use of pesticides. “The excessive use of pesticides over the decades has created a buildup of dangerous substances in the Cypriot countryside causing pollution and worsening desertification,” the party said.

The announcement was issued following a Horticulturalists’ Union meeting in Limassol at the weekend. During the meeting, the horticulturalists called for amendments to the legislation that controls the sale and use of pesticides, including the introduction of pesticide prescriptions and the compulsory employment of a horticulturalist at all pesticide shops.

The union will put its suggestions to the Agriculture Minister at scheduled meeting on June 20. Meanwhile, the Green Party said its position on the issue, which had failed to receive parliamentary support, was that pesticides should only be sold at specialised shops and only after presenting a prescription from a licensed horticulturist, as was the way at medical and veterinary pharmacies.

The party also suggested that all professional users of pesticides took special lessons, certified by the Agriculture Ministry that had to be renewed every three years.

“Other than appropriate use, the professionals will have to be informed about existing legislation and possible changes to existing regulation,” it said. Examples included pesticides that had been banned so that farmers were aware and did not purchase any more even though their sale was still allowed for a period of time following the ban.

“One such example is lanate, which is still on traders’ shelves despite its ban by the EU,” it said. “The thoughtless use of pesticides lead to residues in foods, ground and underwater pollution, and creates problems to the user,” it said. The party reiterated its plea to move towards environmental farming methods.

“Only food and animal food produced through local organic farming can guarantee food safety,” it said.

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