

# MORE THAN A KERNEL OF TRUTH

## Corn is killing butterflies & bees



Corn is often sweet and delicious. But you may be surprised to learn it harbors a secret. **Today, nearly all conventional corn in the U.S. is grown from neonicotinoid-coated seeds.** (Pictured above) These insecticides are absorbed into the plants, affecting corn used for feed grain, human consumption, and alternative fuels. Neonicotinoids, widely banned in Europe since 2018 due to their impact on bees, have also contributed significantly to the decline in butterfly populations.

**A recent study reported in *The New York Times* on June 20, 2024, found that neonicotinoids are associated with a 33 percent decline in monarch butterflies.** This 17-year study published in the peer-reviewed journal [PLOS ONE](#) highlights mounting evidence that neonicotinoid-treated seeds are more harmful to butterfly species in the American Midwest than herbicides, land use changes, or climate factors. As butterfly populations decline, so do birds that rely on caterpillars as a key food source, linking declines in insect and bird populations.

Despite widespread use, **neonicotinoid-treated seeds provide little to no economic benefit to farmers**, according to [Cornell University](#) research that points to safer alternatives. Treated seeds are purchased and planted months before pests, diseases, or invasive weeds appear, which may fail to address the problems they target. This ensures sales and profits for the

pesticides industry without guaranteeing benefits for farmers, while contributing to the reduction of millions of birds, bees and butterflies.

**Neonicotinoids and liver function measures in U.S. adults**

Additionally, concerns are emerging about neonicotinoids' potential impact on human health, with ongoing investigations by the [NIH](#) and other institutions into their association with liver function measures in U.S. adults. Future research is recommended.

Our partners in the CT Coalition for Pesticide Reform will be addressing this vital issue again in the next legislative session in Hartford. We welcome your thoughts.