

The Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use in Ireland (CRRU Ireland)

CRRU Ireland was launched in September 2013. Its aim is the protection of wildlife while promoting and providing effective rodent control through the responsible use of rodenticides in rural, semi-urban and urban settings. CRRU Ireland involves nine companies all of which are Irish rodenticide product authorization holders and major manufacturers /distributors of rodenticides.

There are important concerns about the use of rodenticides in Ireland. These include concerns about the exposure of wildlife to compounds used in vertebrate pest control and the widespread distribution of low-level non-lethal residues of anticoagulants in top predator species of birds of prey.

Recent Research in Ireland has revealed that 85% of Barn Owls contain low levels of rodenticides in their tissues, rodenticides that were ingested with their prey species – brown rats and mice. It is also of concern that rodenticides have been detected in non-mammal eating species such as peregrine falcons and sparrowhawks. It is presumed that these rodenticides entered their food chains in slugs and snails that fed on poisoned bait and in turn were eaten by bird species preyed on by these top predator birds of prey.

In order to address these issues CRRU Ireland has organised training courses for pest management technicians which on application made leads to Wildlife Aware accreditation. To date some 125 pest management technicians have completed wildlife aware training in Ireland. Three further courses are planned for 2015. CRRU Ireland has been successful in ensuring that GLAS – the new Agri-Environment scheme for farmers – specifies that participants should comply with the CRRU code in their daily farming activities.

CRRU Ireland holds three meetings per year with its stakeholders who comprise all those

for whom the work of CRRU is relevant – representatives of Industry, Food Safety, Environmental Organisations, Government Departments, Farmers Organisations etc. The most recent meeting was held on 30th July. An update was provided on EU regulatory matters, a report on wildlife incidents was provided and the imminent publication of the RAPTOR reports for 2012, 2013 and 2014 was flagged. These were subsequently published in early September and contain full details of wildlife incidents, including incidents that involved traces of rodenticides in the carcasses of birds of prey analysed.

There was a report from the CRRU Ireland Working Group on Best Practice Guidance. Comments on the draft Guidance Document were invited. CRRU Ireland currently is providing financial support for a first Irish survey on the extent and distribution of anti-coagulant resistance in rodent pest species in Ireland – a survey that commenced on 1 October/

The next meeting will be held on 26 November. The XRRU website is www.thinkwildlife.org