

## **Flower bulbs and crop protection agents**

**The use of crop protection agents means that residues of these agents can be left behind on the flower bulbs. All the batches of flower bulbs contained in the Bulbs4Kids kits are safe for children and teachers to handle and plant.**

### **What kinds of substances are they?**

Crop protection agents (also known as pesticides and herbicides) are substances used in agriculture and horticulture to protect crops from diseases, pests and weeds. They protect the flower bulbs not just during cultivation but also during processing, storage and transport. Their use keeps the flower bulbs from becoming unusable; this can happen, for example, when they rot due to a fungal disease. Crop protection agents are not used until absolutely necessary and if no other organic approach will be effective.

### **Are they safe?**

Crop protection agents are authorised for use in the Netherlands only if they are safe for 'people, animals and the environment'. To be assured of this, they are first subjected to extensive research. The rules for authorisation are stipulated in the Plant Protection Products and Biocides Act. Verifying the safety of these agents is done at both the European and national levels. In the Netherlands, the government has appointed the Board for the Authorization of Plant Protection Products and Biocides to be responsible for this.

### **Rules**

Whenever there is no other choice but to use crop protection agents, their application is also subject to rules. The agents may only be used in certain quantities and according to certain frequencies to be sure that:

- there is no danger to the health of the people using the agents
- there is no danger for the end user (those who plant the flower bulbs)
- there is no environmental impact

The Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority monitors whether pesticides and herbicides are used correctly.