The UK is set for the first major cross-sector review of weed management after the loss of linuron opened up gaps in weed control across the horticultural and potato sectors.

AHDB and the British Beet Research Organisation (BBRO) have issued a joint call for the review of UK cropping systems, which will cover cereals and oilseeds, horticulture (field and protected crops), potatoes and sugar beet, as well as grassland.

The project was partly triggered by the decision in January 2017 not to renew authorisation for herbicide linuron, a mainstay of potato, carrot and parsnip production, among other crops.

Last year, Ian Holmes, research and development chair at the British Carrot Growers Association, described the move as “a blow to growers both in terms of efficacy and the relative cost of the alternative strategies”.

With £36,000 set aside for the review, it is hoped the project will identify improved ways to manage weeds and innovative research approaches by early 2019.

Joe Martin, AHDB senior crop protection scientist for weeds, said: “Weed control is a major challenge across all cropping sectors and it is essential limited resources are pooled to find new solutions.

“There are many examples of the challenges crop production faces. The recent loss of linuron, for example, has opened up gaps in weed control across the horticultural and potato sectors.”

He added that the diversity of UK cropping systems was “both a challenge and an opportunity” – a challenge because of the wide range of crops, weeds and systems, and an opportunity because of the diverse range of weed control measures already being deployed.

The review will identify ways to combine the use of a diminishing range of conventional synthetic herbicides with alternative options, whose economic feasibility will be assessed where possible.

Non-chemical options, biopesticides, biological controls, herbicide-tolerant varieties, application technology and novel approaches – such as the use of robotics, drones, electric weeding and modelling – will all be investigated as part of the review.

Ways to improve understanding of weed biology, changes to weed populations and allelopathy will also be investigated.

The review’s findings will provide funders, including AHDB and BBRO, with the information they need to coordinate investment through a targeted programme of research and knowledge exchange.

Funding proposals to be involved in the review must be sent to AHDB by midday on 12 August 2018 and the successful applicant will be informed later in the summer.
Click [here](http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts) for further information, including how to make an application.