

ECPA Position on the Sustainable Use Directive

By protecting crops from pests and diseases, pesticides help play a vital role in allowing farmers to produce safe and high quality food in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. The Sustainable Use Directive seeks to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides by reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment¹.

The pesticide industry is committed to:

- Promote good agricultural practices that ensures that pesticides, whether of chemical or natural origin, are used by European farmers in a safe and responsible manner in line with the Sustainable Use Directive (1)²
- Provide trainings and schemes for farmers at national level that encourage the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (2), accelerate the wider adoption of modern low-drift application technologies and practices as well as the collection of empty pesticide containers (3) in order to further increase the level of protection for humans and the environment; promote and disseminate Best Management Practices to minimize pesticides losses into water sources and minimize the impact on biodiversity (4)³
- Continue to invest in the latest crop protection solutions such as precision and digital agriculture as well as non-chemical alternatives of natural origin, helping both small and large-scale European farmers to remain competitive, whilst producing food in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly manner⁴

In addition, ECPA calls on the Commission and Member States to:

- Encourage Members States, via their National Action Plans, to focus on the reduction of risks concerning the usage of pesticides for human health and the environment. This can be achieved by establishing additional complimentary risk indicators at national level in the context of agricultural productivity needs in line with the EU's Farm 2 Fork strategy
- Continue to monitor and support member state competent authorities as well as farmers' efforts in the implementation of the Sustainable Use Directive, and report back to the European Commission in order to have a better understanding of where the gaps and practical difficulties exist which hinder its full implementation
- Whilst ensuring farmers have access to wide ranging toolbox of crop protection solutions, continue to promote the uptake of Integrated Pest Management principles by all farmers across Europe, taking into account that such principles will vary across the EU due to the diversity of agricultural production, climatic conditions, soil structures, pest pressure, etc.
- Ensure that training and certification schemes for farmers, operators and application equipment are kept consistently updated at the national level, and drive the harmonization of application technology standards across the EU
- Continue to ensure the monitoring of food and water in line with current EU legislation on Maximum Residue Limits and Water Framework Directive

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/sustainable_use_pesticides_en

² <https://www.ecpa.eu/more-with-less>

³ <https://sustainability.ecpa.eu/>

⁴ <https://www.ecpa.eu/commitments/2030-commitments>

- Identify possible outdated aspects in the current Directive, and consider possible remedies to accommodate the benefits and potential of new technologies that have come to the market after the drafting of the current Directive e.g. state-of-art drift reduction application technologies and precision application with e.g. drones
- In order to ensure an adequate implementation of IPM, foster the development of the farmers' pest control toolbox, by establishing clear and workable criteria allowing new substances (e.g. Low Risk active substances) to be registered.