

## Der Spiegel - Letter to the Editor

29 March 2022

In your article 'Weizen als Waffe', of 26 March 2022, you write that ***"PR-Fronttrupps wie CropLife Europe, die von der Pestizidbranche aufgesetzt wurden, torpedieren den Green Deal schon länger. Sie dürften es als Erfolg verbuchen, dass die EU-Kommission die Vorstellung ihres Fahrplans zur zentralen Farm-to-Fork-Strategie verschoben hat. Die sieht vor, dass alle Mitgliedstaaten Gesetze zur Halbierung des Pestizidgebrauchs bis 2030 vorlegen müssen – gegenwärtig offenbar zu heikel."***

In fact, as you can read in many of our recent blog posts, media articles and public interventions, we have completely the opposite viewpoint from what you have stated.

I recently wrote that CropLife Europe strongly believes that "Sustainability, biodiversity and agriculture can – indeed must – co-exist." I added: "Of course, the war in Ukraine creates enormous uncertainty over the 'how', but that surely just makes the need to find solutions more urgent, rather than abandoning our efforts altogether."

Let us be absolutely clear: CropLife Europe supports the European Union's Green Deal and we also believe that the fundamentals of the Farm to Fork strategy are sound.

Our industry has not been calling for a delay in the publication of the Sustainable Use Directive revision either. On the contrary, we are eager to contribute to the discussions on the proposal once it is released. It would be another opportunity to exchange views and openly promote the innovative agricultural tools and technologies that will be essential for a sustainable and secure food supply.

Of course, we understand the decision of the European Commission to postpone the publication of the Sustainable Use Directive in light of the war in Ukraine but we don't believe it's about shelving the sustainability agenda. Interim measures will need to be applied due to the war in Ukraine, but climate change remains a great threat to food security.

For the European farming sector to undergo the rapid transformation needed to meet the requirements of the Farm to Fork strategy, European farmers and their suppliers must have an EU regulatory environment that supports innovation and ensure quick access to the market. Pests and diseases do not conveniently wait.

Our sector is accelerating its efforts to develop innovative technologies. We are rapidly coming up with new ideas to help farmers contend with everything from pests and disease, extreme weather events to society's changing dietary trends – and for all of these new innovations, the principle of 'bringing positive benefit to our environment' remains our top priority.

By ensuring timely regulatory authorisations, the European Union can allow rapid access to a variety of innovative crop protection solutions, so helping farmers improve the quality, market access and tradability of their produce.

As the threat to the global food supply rises, it is up to everyone involved to ensure that we do everything possible to avert a food crisis, whether from war or from climate change.

CropLife Europe is keen to engage in a broader dialogue and help provide the solutions.

Olivier de Matos  
CropLife Europe – Director General