

To:
Mr. Olivér Várhelyi
Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare
European Commission

Brussels, 20 January 2025

Dear Commissioner Várhelyi,

On behalf of CropLife Europe, I extend my warm congratulations on your appointment to the College of Commissioners. Today, the EU requires both vision and a clear framework to address the challenges and opportunities outlined in the Draghi report. We are excited to introduce CropLife Europe as partners in building a more competitive and sustainable agricultural sector for Europe.

As the European organisation representing the crop protection sector, we advocate for an outcome-focused approach that leverages a sustainable toolbox of solutions for farmers. Our members are 25 global companies, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and 32 national associations operating in conventional pesticides, biopesticides, plant biotechnology, and digital and precision agriculture.

With your work on the European Biotech Act and food safety, your portfolio is of vital importance to the future success of European agriculture. We believe our technical expertise and resources can contribute meaningfully to a productive partnership with the European Commission in driving this transformation. Your target to accelerate the use of bio-controls in agriculture is of great importance to us and we are eager to contribute to developments in this area.

In line with this, I would like to take this letter as an opportunity to highlight the work on our 2030 Commitments launched in 2021, especially in biocontrol and digital. These Commitments focus on three main priorities: fostering Innovation and Investment, advancing the Circular Economy, and protecting People and the Environment.

This year, we are proud to share substantial progress across these areas, demonstrating our alignment with the Green Deal ambitions and the Farm to Fork Strategy:

Innovation & Investment

Our members have committed to invest €10 billion in Digital and Precision Agricultural technologies and an additional €4 billion in biopesticides by 2030. We have already made substantial progress, with €3.8 billion allocated to digital agronomy and €2.4 billion to biopesticides. This represents 38% and 60% of our respective targets.

Circular Economy

Our dedication to resource efficiency is central to our packaging recovery and recycling efforts. In 2023, we achieved a 71.8% collection rate for plastic packaging, with an ambitious target of reaching a 75% collection rate across all EU countries by 2025. Notably, 89% of the collected plastic was successfully processed for recycling, underscoring our focus on turning waste into valuable resources.

Protecting People & the Environment

We have reached 69% of our goal to train 1 million advisors, trainers, and farmers in best management practices. Additionally, we are on track to make Closed Transfer Systems available to all European farmers and operators by 2030, significantly reducing exposure risks during product handling.

Beyond these achievements, we support the main recommendations from the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture, particularly the emphasis on fostering innovation to ensure a sustainable and secure food system. This vision aligns closely with CropLife Europe's values and goals.

Once again, congratulations on your appointment. We would welcome the opportunity to meet you and your team to explore avenues for collaboration and share further insights into how our sector can support Europe's agricultural and environmental ambitions.

Thank you for your attention and we look forward to working together.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olivier de Matos', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Olivier de Matos
Director General

Cc.

Laszlo Kristoffy, Head of Cabinet.

Katri Teedumäe, Deputy Head of Cabinet.