



Harmonised and Standardised procedures for evaluation of plant protection products, fertilizers and soil conditioners for use in organic agriculture

The objective of the 'ORGANIC INPUTS EVALUATION' project is to develop recommendations for harmonized and standardized procedures for the evaluation of plant protection products, as well as for fertilizers and soil conditioners authorized for use in organic agriculture according to the Council Regulation EEC 2092/91.

Harmonized and standardized procedures for evaluation of plant protection products, fertilizers and soil conditioners

Regulation of plant protection products (PPP) and fertilisers and soil conditioners (F&SC) has great implications on farming practices and on the crop-specific economy, and hereby on the income and the competitiveness of farmers. The use of PPP and F&SC in European organic agriculture is regulated by the Council Regulation EEC 2092/91 Annex II. The strict regulation of PPP and F&SC in European organic agriculture is also of crucial importance for the trust of the consumers in the safety and quality of certified organic crops.

Article 7 of Regulation 2092/91 establishes the principles for including new products in Annex II. However, these are rudimentary and cause difficulties in practical implementation.

Furthermore, Article 7 contains a “non-contact clause” which states that new products may only be included if ‘the conditions for their use preclude any direct contact with the seed, the crop, crop products [...]’. This is a major obstacle to the inclusion of new products. In conclusion, there is no useful procedure for the evaluation of new products to be included on the lists of authorised products in Annex II, nor for the re-evaluation of products already on the lists or for setting of limits and other conditions for the use of PPP and F&SC. This lack of procedures may result in very time consuming and complex evaluation procedures for inclusion of new products and removal of existing products, this being an obstacle for the development of organic agriculture in the EU.





Objectives

- ▶ To develop recommendations for a harmonized and standardised procedure for evaluation of plant protection products allowed for use in organic agriculture according to Council Regulation EEC 2092/91, Annex II B
- ▶ To develop recommendations for a harmonized and standardised procedure for evaluation of fertilizers and soil conditioners allowed for use in organic agriculture according to Council regulation EEC 2092/91, Annex II A.



Work programme

The project consists of six workpackages (WPs) with five workshops. WP1 is for coordination and project management.

Inventories on current implementation of Annex II and evaluation procedures in the participating countries were elaborated in WP2 (PPP) and WP3 (F&SC).

Standardised procedures for evaluation of PPP and F&SC were elaborated in WP4 & WP5.

Recommendations on evaluation procedures for PPP and F&SC plus research needs and dissemination are currently discussed in WP6.

This Concerted Action provides a discussion forum for questions related to the evaluation of PPP or F&SC allowed for use in organic farming. Institutions engaged in this area are kindly invited to participate in the discussion!

Facts on the project

Funding

The project is carried out with financial support from the Commission of the European Communities under the work programme Quality of Life, contract no. QLK5-CT-2002-02565, within the 5th framework programme of RTD, Key Action 5, with co-funding by the Swiss Federal Office for Education and Science (BBW 02.0113).

Type of project: Concerted Action

Project No: QLK5-CT-2002-02565

Project duration: 2003 - 2005

Project partners

The following institutions participate in this project:

- Danish Research Centre for Organic Farming (DARCOF), Denmark (Administrative Co-ordinator)
- Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland (Scientific Co-ordinator)
- EcoS Consultancy, United Kingdom
- Istituto Sperimentale per le Nutrizione delle Piante (ISNP), Italy
- Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica (AIAB), Italy

- Louis Bolk Instituut (LBI), The Netherlands
- Soil Association, United Kingdom
- Ludwig Boltzmann Institut for Biological Agriculture, Austria
- Austria Bio Garantie / InfoXgen, Austria
- Associação Portuguesa de Agricultura Biologica (Agrobio), Portugal
- Universität Kassel, Germany
- Danish Plant Directorate, Denmark

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How to follow the project

The website for the project is www.organic-inputs.org. Here it is possible to download project reports, subscribe to newsletters etc.

Several publications have been prepared during this project. A CD with proposals for criteria for the evaluation of plant protection products, fertilizers and soil conditioners to be used in organic agriculture will be published in early 2006.

All publications can be ordered via the website.

Public Conference: Evaluating inputs for organic farming – a new system

A final public conference for the Organic Inputs Project will be held on October 13, 2005 in Brussels, Belgium, at the European Commission's Borschette conference centre.

In the conference, the consortium behind the Organic Inputs Evaluation project will present proposals based on its work, asking feedback from the audience of interested stakeholders. The conference participants are invited to give their comments on the proposals presented at the conference. Based on this input, the consortium will elaborate the final recommendations for a new input evaluation procedure, which will be proposed to the European Commission.

The project consortium asks the interested stakeholders for help to review, improve and refine the project recommendations and is looking forward to welcoming you as participant in the conference.

The conference programme and further information concerning the conference can be found at www.organicinputs.org/conference.html.