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Joint Press Release

Thirteen partners of the Agri-Food Chain Roundtable on Plant Protection react to Farm to Fork targets on plant protection products in a joint letter

Following the anniversary of the Farm to Fork Strategy on 20th May, today several members of the Agri-Food Chain Roundtable on Plant Protection have released a co-signed open letter about the importance of a holistic assessment before making any decisions about the reduction of pesticide use, including the target for 50% reduction of the use of chemicals as set in the Farm to Fork Strategy.

In Europe, pesticide use and risk has decreased sharply over the past 50 years. Thanks to innovation in agriculture, the average use rate of active ingredients per hectare for herbicides for instance, has dropped by 97%¹. Ultimately, over the past 60 years, the average use rates of newly introduced active ingredients have been reduced². Currently less than 470 active substances (including 29 low-risk active substances and 23 basic substances³) are available in the market to protect crop and plant production.

Max Schulman, Member of the Finnish Farmers Organisation (MTK) in Copa and Cogeca and current Chair of the Roundtable expressed that, *“In the near future we see ways to do better*

¹ EEA, 2018

² Phillips McDougall, 2018

³ EU Pesticides Database, 2021 (https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/eu-pesticides-db_en)

with less plant protection products using biocontrol technologies, crop rotation systems, digitalization methods or new Genomic Techniques. However, all options are not currently available on the ground and the political objective of the Farm to Fork in further reducing the use of active substances is a challenge in all the main EU productions. There is a clear need to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the cumulative economic, social and environmental impacts of the various targets for EU agriculture set out in the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies before taking any political or binding regulatory decisions.”

The signatories call on the Commission for a realistic time frame to be considered before taking any legislative decision or change in the near future. Dialogue has never been so essential, as the agricultural value chain in the EU try to attain the ambitious Green Deal targets.

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Read the Joint letter [here](#)

Translations will be available in DE, ES, FR, IT, PL and RO on the Copa-Cogeca website soon.

For further information, please contact:

Paula de Vera
Senior Policy Advisor
Paula.deVera@copa-cogeca.eu

Jean-Baptiste Boucher
Communications Director
Mobile: + 32 474 840 836
jean-baptiste.boucher@copa-cogeca.eu

CDP(21)3595:1
