



European Commission

# Supporting farmers to reduce the use of chemical pesticides with the CAP

June 2022  
#EUGreenDeal

For many farmers, pest control in crops still heavily relies on chemical pesticides. The new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) can financially support farmers to reduce this dependency on chemical pesticides, by shifting to better agronomic practices, alternative pest control techniques and precision farming. The CAP, Horizon Europe and the Digital Europe Programme will also support knowledge exchange, research and innovation to enable the transition towards sustainable crop protection.



## THE CAP SUPPORTS FARMERS

The EU will respond to the urgent need to change the course on pesticides and support farmers in their actions to do so. For 5 years, Member States can use the CAP to cover the costs of the new requirements for farmers. This can compensate for any additional costs and prevent price increases in food.

### 1 Practices that benefit the climate and environment

#### Initiatives under the new CAP

- Eco-schemes
- Management commitments (previously agri-environmental and climate measures under rural development)
- Collective approaches by producer organisations in certain sectors (fruits and vegetables, etc.)
- Knowledge exchange, advisors and finance for innovation

#### ...to promote:

- Organic farming
- Integrated pest management
- Biological control
- ...and more



Member States must use

- at **least 25% of their CAP direct income support budget for eco-schemes**
- **35% of their rural development budget** for actions that benefit the climate and environment, including the reduction of farmers' dependency on chemical pesticides.





## 2 Investments, precision farming and risk management

- Help farmers purchase innovative **technologies and equipment** for more targeted control methods, such as drones, GPS guided sprayers and robotic weeders.



## 3 Advice and training

- Member States have to provide advice and technical support to farmers to help them implement better practices through the CAP Farm Advisory Services.
- Advice to farmers, setting up of advisory services and training of advisors may be financed by the CAP
- New knowledge will be made available to advisors and farmers through the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS).
- Practitioners' grassroots innovative ideas will be supported via EIP-AGRI Operation Groups including cross border cooperation



## 4 Research, innovation and digital solutions



- **Horizon 2020** has already funded over 30<sup>1</sup> research and innovation projects with an investment of over €160 million to protect plant health and promote integrated pest management
- **Horizon Europe** will develop a wide range of tools for prevention, monitoring, control and management of plant pests and diseases, along with risk management strategies, to seek alternatives to more hazardous pesticides and foster the use of precision farming technologies.
- **The European Innovation Partnership** for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI) brings together innovation actors (farmers, advisers, researchers, businesses, NGOs and others) in agriculture and forestry at EU level to speed up innovation.
- **More than 427 operational groups**, composed of farmers, researchers, advisors, and businesses, work on finding innovative solutions for the sustainable use of pesticide funded by the CAP.
- **The Digital Europe programme** will foster capacity building, including through testing and experimentation facilities for artificial intelligence in agri-food and Digital Innovation Hubs

<sup>1</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/research-area/agriculture-forestry-and-rural-areas/plant-health\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/research-area/agriculture-forestry-and-rural-areas/plant-health_en)

