



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

Take part in the pioneering competition to help PAN Europe find the EUROPEAN IP FARMER OF THE YEAR

Nominate farmers for the ‘Bee Friendly in the International Year of Biodiversity Competition!’

Pesticide Action Network Europe in collaboration with the European Bee Coalition

Integrated Production (IP) can mean different things to different people. To PAN Europe the definition is clear: IP is a holistic, production-based approach to farming, which embraces health and environmental concerns and reconciles the roles of land-manager and farmer. IP is not an abrupt and dogmatic approach, and it is not the same as organic farming, but it can be a stage on the road to fully organic farming. But IP is pragmatic and farmer-friendly. By treating our fields and environment with ever greater consideration, we can steadily develop a way of farming which benefits us all. The heart of IP is ‘prevention first’, employing agricultural practices which prevent pests. It means avoiding monoculture, rotating crops, smaller plots, setting up buffer zones, buffer strips, hedges etc. IP depends on farmers checking their fields, training, receiving financial incentives and independent, innovative advice, using sustainable agricultural practices and applying non-chemical alternatives, and only as a last resource use pesticides and that from a selected list of chemicals.

This year’s topic: This year is the United Nations’ International Year of Biodiversity. To reflect this theme, we are focusing on the need for bee-friendly IP in agriculture, in view of the recent phenomenon of bees dying in large numbers. This occurrence matters economically because many agricultural crops are pollinated by bees. We do not yet fully understand the causes of the syndrome, but they may include environmental change-related stresses, malnutrition and pesticide use.

The Competition to promote best practice and raise awareness among other farmers

We see IP as a dynamic approach encouraging environmental and health-friendly trail-blazers. We hope this will inspire other farmers. To support this goal, PAN Europe is launching a competition to find the ‘European IP Farmer of the Year’. It aims to make IP easier for farmers, policy-makers and the

general public to understand. We shall show how IP can be biodiversity-friendly by looking at it from a bee's perspective this year!

Launched successfully in March, we now ask you to support the competition!

The competition was successfully launched at a huge PAN Europe exhibition and debate event on IP at the EESC during the Week Without Pesticides, March 25th 2010.

This is a first of its kind Europe-wide competition. PAN Europe has 32 members across 19 countries and we hope as many of you as possible will be able to take part.

Promoting the competition in national countries

The competition entry form is available to download from the PAN Europe website http://www.pan-europe.info/Bee_friendly_competition.html We hope that you our members, supporters and other organisations and individuals will promote taking part as creatively as possible – through the farming press, events, newsletters, farmers markets etc.

How can you promote this competition in your country?

- Talking to producers at farmers markets.
- Farming events such as agricultural shows, county fairs and young farmers clubs.
- Press, e.g. specifically farming business magazines, wildlife, food and environment focused magazines or through the farming or environment editor of national or local press.
- Ask suitable decision makers to promote the competition.
- On your organisation's website – have a link to the PAN Europe competition website.
- Think about an event you may be having later this year, where it could be an opportunity to announce your national winner.
- Via internet chat rooms and network sites.

What will it involve you doing to make this a success?

We hope that each PAN member will have a staff member or volunteer willing to be a contact point to promote the competition in the above ways mentioned, receive competition entry forms and organise a selection process of those to nominate a winner.

At least help us to make sure that this proposal gets to the person responsible for biodiversity and bee within your organisation.

How to nominate your farmer

We would like national PAN members to nominate their winning 'IP farmer' to PAN Europe. Farmers are busy people and so we know we may miss out on some good examples unless national organisations can be really pro-active! So we encourage nominators to contact their farmer to carry out the interview over the phone, at their farmers market, by post or visiting the farm. If you farm and would like to enter the competition, simply fill in an entry form

yourself and return it to the national contact person and Henriette at PAN Europe.

If you are interested in finding out more about helping with this competition in your country, please let Henriette know by email henriette@pan-europe.info or telephone Belgium 00 32 2 503 0481

Choosing a national winner

National PAN organisations will take a lead to co-ordinate receiving and evaluating the nominations in their country. This is an opportunity to host a national winner event – perhaps at an agricultural show, a lecture on ‘Bees and Biodiversity’ or fundraising evening dinner event. Members will need to fundraise for the winner event themselves but this could be a pioneering opportunity to attract sponsors, so consider which organisations in your country might support such a competition.

Choosing the overall European winner

National PAN members will select the best three practitioners based on the survey results. The selection committee will visit the three farms, accompanied by journalists. Alternatively, they could choose the best entry based on the questionnaire, followed by a visit to the shortlisted farms, or watch a web-based presentation. From the national winners shortlist, PAN Europe will name the EU IP farmer of the year.

Announcing the winner

The 2011 Bee Friendly IP Farmer of the Year will be announced at a media event in the European Parliament, during the 2011 for Alternatives to Pesticides Week, 20-30 March, 2011.

Competition entry deadline:

- We suggest countries have received all nominations for IP farmer of the year in their country by the end of October, followed shortly by an event to choose a national winner.**
- We hope to have received details of all the national winners by the end of the year.**
- January 2011 will see the selection committee decide on the EU winner, and announced at an event during Semanie Sans Pesticide in March 2011.**