



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

Factsheet: How does EU's Common Agricultural Policy impact on knowledge exchange and advisory activities

“If biodiversity is to be restored in Europe and opportunities are to be created for crop production utilizing biodiversity-based ecosystem services such as biological pest control, there must be a Europe-wide shift towards farming with minimum use of pesticides over large areas”
(Geiger, F. et al. 2010)

Factsheet: How EU's Common Agricultural Policy impacts on knowledge exchange and advisory activities of the farmers across Europe

PAN Europe recognises that EU's Common Agricultural Policy contains instruments like the Farm Advisory System and the European Innovative Partnership which can help to inform, train, and advise farmers. We nevertheless consider that huge steps need to be achieved before these tools become effectively operational. We also consider that these tools standing alone will not be able to encourage the transition that the European model of farming so desperately needs.

Gaps in the current Farm Advisory System with regards to pesticide use

Directive 2009/128/EC establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides (SUDP) specifies that as from 2013:

- Member States **shall** take all necessary measures to promote low pesticide-input pest management, giving wherever possible priority to non-chemical methods, **so that professional users of pesticides switch to practices and products with the lowest risk to human health and the environment among those available for the same pest problem.** Low pesticide-input pest management includes integrated pest management as well as organic farming according to Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products.
- Member States **shall establish** or support the establishment of necessary conditions for the implementation of integrated pest management. In particular, they **shall ensure** that professional users have at their disposal **information and tools** for pest monitoring and decision making, as well as **advisory services** on integrated pest management.
- Member States **shall establish** appropriate **incentives to encourage professional users to implement crop or sector-specific guidelines** for integrated pest management on a voluntary basis. Public authorities and/or organisations representing particular professional users may draw up such guidelines. Member States shall refer to those guidelines that they consider relevant and appropriate in their National Action Plans.

This was officially integrated into the Farm Advisory System, as a mandatory measure, as part of the 2013 CAP reform into regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy now states in article 12.2 (e) that the farm advisory system shall cover as mandatory: *requirements at the level of beneficiaries as defined by Member States for implementing Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, in particular the requirement referred to in Article 14 of Directive 2009/128/EC.* In reality this means that any EU farmer as from 2015 has a right to be informed by the FAS about alternatives to pesticides.

However, as can be seen in the annex, Member States are taking different approaches towards how many resources to dedicate to this objective, and one (Malta) has still not applied this. And while you would expect that this non-compliance would result in immediate questions from the European Commission towards the Member States in question, to verify compliance and with that consider potential financial correction of the direct payment.

In reality, PAN Europe's access to document requests reveal that to date the European Commission has not been communicating with Member States at all on this matter, despite of our regular complaints to European Commission staff. The last and only report evaluating the FAS, since its introduction in 2007 was published in 2009¹.

There thus seems to be a serious gap in the FAS regarding the European Commission's verification of Member States' implementation of the FAS.

The FAS could or rather should be an important tool to encourage and allow farmers to reduce their dependency on pesticides by implementing integrated pest management which is mandatory for the all EU farmers to do. But in the current FAS, as can be seen in the annex, the majority of Member States have nominated private companies to deliver the work and many of the consultants' have strong conflict of interests with the agroindustry lobby.

The European Commission's report on 'Member State National Action Plans and progress in the implementation of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides' ([COM\(2017\) 587 final](#)) specifies: *Member States are required to include the IPM general principles in their farm advisory system under Article 12 (2) (e) of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013. Member States highlighted that official advisory services, which are independent of commercial interest, are very important for IPM implementation*. **Another fundamental aspect of FASs is that it is important to create independent FAS. This concept has been included into the CAP reform proposal and it is a good start to build on....**

The ways forwards for the EU to promote knowledge and (independent advises):

One of the main objectives of the FAS should be assisting farmers in their implementation of environmental legislation including the SUDP. The future FAS should not only be independent but should be highly trained about non-chemical alternatives to pesticides, have a broad field experience on the topic and should thus play a **major role in assisting the transition**.

Secondly, the FAS must be made **visible** allowing this body to become an attractive technical support in allowing farmers to strongly reduce their dependency on pesticides. Ideally, FAS's mission could be extended to offer **technical support to groups outside farming**, for instance local communities going pesticide-free.

Finally, the FAS should be made **dynamic** to continuously update their knowledge on non-chemical alternatives, obtaining knowledge on this to trigger the necessary transition among others from:

- The French National Agronomic Research Institute INRA's research work 'towards chemical free agriculture'² can be inspirational for other Member States.
- The knowledge being built and shared in the European Innovation Partnership for

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/2009-fas_en

² <https://inra-dam-front-resources-cdn.wedia-group.com/ressources/afile/442690-5075f-resource-priorites-scientifiques-horizon-europe-food-2030-pesticide.pdf>

Agricultural productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI), such as the focus group on non-chemical weed management in arable cropping systems³, need to be spread throughout the EU. Examples of initiatives (e.g. the one in Austria on ‘Organic Dock Control’⁴ and the one in France on "Zéro herbicides en cultures pérennes méditerranéennes"⁵) are numerous but little known. PAN Europe is calling for another focus group on towards pesticide free agriculture to be established in 2020, which could help overcome knowledge gaps even further.

- Horizon 2020 EU financed research projects like OK-net arable⁶ which ended in 2018 and developed more than 150 materials with practical solutions for improving organic arable cropping have been collected, including solutions for non-chemical weed, and IWM PRAISE⁷ which started in 2017 aiming to support and promote integrated weed management (IWM) in Europe.

It is time to establish an EU pool of expertise on this matter, and PAN Europe is willing to contribute!

As mentioned in [PAN Europe’s publication](#), alternative methods in weed management or the use of glyphosate and other herbicides:

Remember the slogan of the BHU Future Farming Centre, Permanent Agriculture and Horticulture: Science and Extension

With Chemical Weed Management most of the skill and knowledge lies with the biochemist - farmers and growers just follow the instructions

With Non Chemical Weed Management (NCWM) most of the skill and knowledge lies with the farmer and grower

Effective NCWM is impossible if you don’t understand weeds /plants and how they interact with their environment

The FAS we need in the future is a FAS shifting the knowledge from the biochemist to the farmer and grower, so the latter need some significant up-skilling but also allows him or her to start working with nature again.

Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN Europe) was founded in 1987 and brings together consumer, public health, environmental organisations, and women’s groups from across Europe. PAN Europe is part of the global network PAN International working to minimise the negative effects and replace the use of harmful pesticides with ecologically sound alternatives.

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³ <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/non-chemical-weed-management-arable-cropping>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/sites/agri-eip/files/field_event_attachments/20160420-21_ws-legnaro-2016_ogs_represented_final_25042016.pdf

⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/find-connect/projects/z%C3%A9ro-herbicides-en-cultures-p%C3%A9rennes>

⁶ <http://farmknowledge.org>

⁷ <https://iwmpraise.eu>

ANNEX 1

Overview of how Member States FAS, and how they inform about SUD

Member State	name	How many designated bodies and advisors operate?
Austria	Bundesministerium für Nachhaltigkeit und Tourismus – status: public	Nr. of designated bodies: 11 Nr. of advisors: 60
Belgium, Flandres Belgium, Wallonie	United Experts - Status: private Inagro - Status: semi-public PROTECTEAU - Status: private AGRA-OST - Status: private CR PHYTO - Status: private MICHAMPS - Status: private FIWAP - Status: private IRBAB - Status: private CEPICOP - Status: private FOURRAGES-MIEUX - Status: private CARAH - Status: private CEPIFRUIT - Status: private GFW - Status: private CIM - Status: private CEHW - Status: private OPA-Qualité - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 2 Nr. of advisors: 25 Nr. of designated bodies: 14 Nr. of advisors: 42
Cyprus	Department of Agriculture - Status: public	Nr. of designated bodies: 1 Nr. of advisors: 30
Germany	Landesbetrieb Landwirtschaft Hessen (LLH) - Status: public Landwirtschaftskammer Niedersachsen - Status: semi-public Dienstleistungszentren Ländlicher Raum Rheinland-Pfalz - Status: public Landwirtschaftskammer Schleswig Holstein - Status: public Landwirtschaftskammer für das Saarland - Status: public Sächsisches Landesamt für Umwelt, Landwirtschaft und Geologie - Status: public Landwirtschaftskammer Nordrhein-Westfalen - Status: private Private Beratungsanbieter - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 20 Nr. of advisors: 190
Denmark	N/A	N/A
Spain	ARAGÓN: Dirección General de Alimentación y Fomento Agrario - Status: public CANTABRIA: Organizaciones Profesionales Agrarias. Cooperativas Agrarias - Status: private CASTILLA Y LEÓN: UTE UNIÓN PEQUEÑOS AGRICULTORES Y GANADEROS DE CASTILLA Y LEÓN; UTE PROYECTA GESTIÓN INTEGRAL DE PROYECTOS SL INGENIEROS SPL; UTE AGROVALLE INGENIEROS TÉCNICOS AGRÍCOLAS – OCEBA SOC. COOP; COBADÚ SOCIEDAD COOPERATIVA LIMITADA; FUNDACIÓN RURAL DE BURGOS: UTE ASESORAMIENTO AGRARIO COAG CASTILLA Y LEÓN; AGROPECUARIA PALENTINA SOC. COOP. AGROPAL; SORIACTIVA; PROVIRE PRODUCTOS S.L.; UTE UCCL; CAJA RURAL DE ZAMORA; UTE JOSÉ FÉLIX GALLEGU DEL SAZ; HERBIAGRO; UTE ASESORAMIENTO ASAJA CYL; ABIOMED HIGIENE S.L.; ASOPROVAC ASESORAMIENTO - Status: private CATALUÑA- All registrated bodies - Status: semi-public MURCIA- Organizations registrated in the FAS register - Status: private PAIS VASCO- ABERE, AGA, ABELUR,LURGINTZA, LORRA - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 24 Nr. of advisors: 91

	<p>NAVARRA- Instituto de Tecnología - Status: semi-public</p> <p>CANARIAS- Cabildos Insulares y Dirección General de Agricultura del Gobierno de Canarias - Status: public</p>	
Estonia	Rural Development Foundation - Status: semi-public	<p>Nr. of designated bodies: 1</p> <p>Nr. of advisors: 55</p>
France (mainland)	<p>Chambre d'agriculture - Status: semi-public</p> <p>Centre d'économie rurale - Status: semi-public</p> <p>Inter AX conseil - Status: private</p> <p>Cogedis - Status: private</p> <p>CECAB - Status: private</p> <p>Actura - Status: private</p> <p>Négoce agricole centre atlantique - Status: private</p> <p>Etablissements Perret SA - Status: private</p> <p>Agrosud - Status: private</p>	<p>Nr. of designated bodies: 17</p> <p>Nr. of advisors: 0</p>
Finland	<p>Palvelutoimisto Jaha ay - Status: private</p> <p>Agrineuvo Fiskaali - Status: private</p> <p>Aila Riikonen - Status: private</p> <p>Eerikäinen Esa - Status: private</p> <p>Finska Hushållningssällskapet - Status: private</p> <p>Haikula Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Patama Helena - Status: private</p> <p>Hämeenkyrön Agrotaito Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Ilpo Kukkola T:mi - Status: private</p> <p>Jussi Koskinen - Status: private</p> <p>Kirsi Ahlgren-Tervala - Status: private</p> <p>Maaseutupalvelut Sillanpää Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Matti Kousa - Status: private</p> <p>Meri-Lapin Maatalousneuvos Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Mesilintu Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Nylands Svenska Lantbrukssällskap - Status: private</p> <p>Olli-Pekka Ruponen - Status: private</p> <p>Palvelutoimisto Suokko & Hantula - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Etelä-Pohjanmaa ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Etelä-Savo ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Etelä-Suomi ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Kainuu ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Keski-Suomi ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Keski-Pohjanmaa ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Keskusten Liitto ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Lappi ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Länsi-Suomi ry - Status: private</p> <p>Tippavaaran Maatalouspalvelu Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Laskenta Kajan Oy - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Oulu ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Pohjois-Karjala ry - Status: private</p> <p>ProAgria Pohjois-Savo ry - Status: private</p> <p>Jämijärven Agritilit - Status: private</p> <p>Sirpa Himanen - Status: private</p> <p>Svenska Lantbrukssällskapens förbund - Status: private</p> <p>T:mi Hanna-Maija Nikunen - Status: private</p> <p>Tapio Mattila - Status: private</p> <p>Aki Ojanperä - Status: private</p> <p>Toivo Poikonen - Status: private</p> <p>Urpo Ävist - Status: private</p> <p>Viestintä Oy Tuulihaukka - Status: private</p> <p>Wirmo Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Vuokko Leivonen - Status: private</p> <p>Österbottens Svenska Lantbrukssällskap - Status: private</p> <p>Kotka Consplan Oy - Status: private</p> <p>Tipuset Oy - Status: private</p>	<p>Nr. of designated bodies: 46</p> <p>Nr. of advisors: 211</p>
Croatia	Advisory Service Croatia - Status: public	<p>Nr. of designated bodies: 1</p> <p>Nr. of advisors: 250</p>
Hungary	N/A	N/A
Italy	<p>Both Ministry of agricultural policies and Ministry for health - Status: public</p> <p>Regions/Autonomous Provinces - Status: public</p>	<p>Nr. of designated bodies: 23</p> <p>Nr. of advisors: 40</p>

Ireland	N/A	Nr. of designated bodies: 1 Nr. of advisors: 781
Luxembourg	Chamber_of_Agriculture - Status: semi-public Naturparc_Oewersauer - Status: semi-public Convis - Status: private Synplants - Status: private Domaines_Vinsmoselle - Status: private IBLA_Agriculture - Status: private IBLA_Viticulture - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 8 Nr. of advisors: 24
Lithuania	Lihuanian agricultural advisory service - Status: semi-public Chamber of Agriculture of the Rpublic of Lithuania - Status: public joint stock company „Medstata - Status: private Aleksandras Stulginskis university - Status: public	Nr. of designated bodies: 4 Nr. of advisors: 88
Latvia	N/A	Nr. of designated bodies: 2 Nr. of advisors: 143
Malta	None currently. FAS provider established but not yet in operation. - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 0 Nr. of advisors: 0
Netherlands	Vereniging Agrarische Bedrijfsadviseurs (VAB) - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 1 Nr. of advisors: 155
Portugal (mainland)	Pessoas coletivas de carácter associativo - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 13 Nr. of advisors: 50
Poland	16 ODR i izb rolniczych, podmioty prywatne - Status: semi-public	Nr. of designated bodies: 282 Nr. of advisors: 3841
Sweden	N/A	Nr. of designated bodies: 7 Nr. of advisors: 49
Slovakia	Agroinštitút Nitra, štátny podnik - Status: public Ústredný kontrolný a skúšobný ústav poľnohospodársky v Bratislave - Status: public Slovenská Asociácia Ochrany Rastlín - Status: semi-public Výskumný ústav pôdoznavectva a ochrany pôdy - Status: public Slovenská rastlinolekárska spoločnosť - Status: public	Nr. of designated bodies: 5 Nr. of advisors: 16
Slovenia	Agriculture and Forestry Chamber of Slovenia - Status: public	Nr. of designated bodies: 1 Nr. of advisors: 276
UK England	Ricardo - Status: private	Nr. of designated bodies: 1 Nr. of advisors: 28
Northern Ireland	CAFRE - Status: public	Nr. of designated bodies: 1 Nr. of advisors: 43

Source: DG AGRI 2018, access to document request