



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

Programme for European exchange: Victims of pesticides tell their story

When 13.30-17.30 Wednesday 7 December 2016
Where: Mundo B, Edinburgh street 26 1050 Brussels
Languages: English/French

Background: Générations Futures, have been working with farmers victims of pesticides in France for years now, trying to help them and make sure their story is heard. They are collected on one homepage: <http://victimes-pesticides.fr/>

PAN Germany has for years had for years hosted a hot-line where potential victims could call to get advice, and has now also published a booklet giving the victims a voice, see: http://www.pan-germany.org/download/Kinder-Pestizide_web_F.pdf

Since 2015, PAN Europe has a homepage dedicated to victims of pesticides, trying to gather national initiatives but also adding new stories on from other parts of Europe, see: <http://www.pan-europe.info/campaigns/voices-pesticides-around-europe>

In France there has been increased awareness of the victims of pesticides, there has been a number of important court cases, certain diseases have been recognized as professional diseases by the public health insurance while the topic has also gotten a lot of media attention. Last but not least as something very special in France the victims of pesticides have an association assisting them: <http://www.phyto-victimes.fr/>

The purpose of this workshop is to allow victims to tell their story.

The workshop will be chaired by **Francois Veillerette**, president of PAN Europe

- Welcome by **Francois Veillerette**
- Breaking the wall of silence by **Serge Le Queau** labour union and member of the French Economic and Social Committee

Telling their stories:

- The drama of the four employees working for the trader company Triskalia especially my husband who ended by taking his own life by **Edith Le Goffic**, France
- Victims of pesticides in the wine growing of Prosecco are starting to speak out by **Camilla di Nardi** PAN Europe
- My fight against Lasso and Monsanto by **Paul Francois**, France
- Cancer in my street increasing significantly because of pesticide spraying from cereal growers **Marie Therese Gillet**, Fernelmont, Wallonia

Debate with the active participant of Paul Francois on what kind of support victims of pesticides need.

17.30 end of meeting

Biography

François Veillerette, PAN Europe President

Francois is French and has a teacher education and is the Director of Générations Future (PAN France) which he co-founded and of which he was President for 10 years. He has also been the Vice President of the Picardy region in France in charge of environment, food and health from 2010 to 2015.

Francois is involved in the issues of environmental health and was among other things:

- Founder and Chairman of the Movement for Rights and Respect of Future Generations (MDRGF - now Générations Futures) from 2000 to 2009, he is currently the spokesperson and Director.
- Board Member and current President of the European network Pesticide Action Network (PAN Europe)
- Member of the Steering Committee of the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN)
- Current member of the Writers Association of Journalists for the Environment (JNE)
- Former president of Greenpeace France from 2003 to 2006 and then Vice- President of the same NGO in 2008-2009.
- Francois also co founded the Réseau Environnement Santé (RES) in France.

Paul Francois

I started working at the age of 15 on the family farm. In 1987, I settled on 30 hectares (parallel to the family farm) and in 1991, I cultivated 230 hectares of cereals in very intensive agriculture, based on chemistry. At the end of the 1990s, I formed a cooperative of material and employees with a neighbor, making a total of 400 hectares to cultivate.

In the organization of work, I mainly deal with planting and spraying of plant protection products (3 treatments (fungicides, herbicides, insecticides) twice a year, for a total of 3,000 hectares per year). In 2004, I was poisoned with a herbicide, Lasso, which led to my hospitalization and 5 weeks of work stoppage. In November of the same year, my state of health deteriorated: 5 months of hospitalization and 9 months of work stoppage.

I restarted my activities in July 2005 and after a refusal of recognition of occupational disease from the Mutualité Sociale Agricole (MSA), I began a procedure before the courts. In 2010, after 5 years of battle, I was recognized as having a professional disease by the Bordeaux Court of Appeal, which recognizes Lasso's responsibility in my health problems.

In 2007 and in parallel to my procedure of recognition in occupational disease, I decided to attack Monsanto in court. Monsanto was condemned for the first time in 2012 by the Court of Appeal of Lyon. In September 2015, the High Court of Lyon condemns on appeal and a second time the American firm. At present, I am awaiting the decision of the Court of Cassation, which will have to fix the amount of damages suffered.

Professionally, I decided to convert 100 hectares of my farm to organic prioritizing plots close to residents and public places. The goal is to convert my entire farm to organic before 2020.

The association Phyto-Victimes was created in March 2011, along with several other farmers also poisoned by pesticides. We help professionals who are victims of pesticides, especially by accompanying them in their efforts to recognize occupational diseases. At the present time, we have about 250 files of professionals who are victims of pesticides. We also do prevention in agricultural colleges and among the general public to inform the greatest number of people of the danger of pesticides and alternative solutions to pesticides

...

In addition, we have been cooperating for many years with the public authorities in order to reform legislation on the authorization of pesticides and on regulation in general ...

Currently, the association has a proposed law, introduced by Senator Charentaise Nicole Bonnefoy, to create a compensation fund for the victims of pesticides abounded by the firms. The association has more than 300 members and donors

Marie-Thérèse Gillet, Fernelmont, Belgique

Marie-Thérèse Gillet has lived in the countryside for 70 years. She is therefore not frightened by the slightly muddy roads or rugged terrain. However, for some time she has been fighting two cancers. The municipality of Fernelmont, where she resides, is surrounded by agricultural land and inundated by the spraying of pesticides. In addition to her own, she noticed an abnormally high case of cancers in his neighborhood: 20 of which 8 in the same street. For the past eight months, Marie-Thérèse has been carrying out various actions to challenge local authorities and the population on this subject so that preventive measures are put in place such as buffer zones. The local and regional authorities are launching investigations but have not been taking into account the actual figures for cancers and other pathologies. Today, Marie-Therese is coming to tell us the story of her commune.

Camilla de Nardi

Camilla is currently attending a Master course in Human Ecology and Sustainability at the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Italy. She is also doing an internship at PAN Europe, mainly focusing on the project Voices of Pesticides and a campaign in Veneto (Italy) that aims at minimizing the harmful impact of pesticides on the environment and human health. Camilla is doing her final thesis based on the research led in Veneto, field observations and interviews done with the local people. During her presentation, she will sum up the findings of her research, highlighting the current local situation in Veneto and in prosecco vineyards, by reporting some victims of pesticides' stories.