Croplife meeting of 20 April 2021

Croplife: [redacted] (Croplife), [redacted] (BASF), [redacted] (Croplife), [redacted] (Croplife), [redacted] (Corteva), [redacted] (Bayer digital farming), [redacted] (USA based, Bayer, OECD) [redacted] (Syngenta)

SANTE: [redacted], [redacted], (SANTE F3) [redacted] (SANTE A1)

Purpose of meeting: Discuss policy options on precision agriculture and drones and electronic record keeping of PPP use

[redacted] updated on SUD evaluation – now defining future policy options. These are still under discussion. [redacted] emphasised that no decisions have been made at this point. External evaluation ongoing – first report produced. Impact assessment is the next step – policy options needed for this process. Policy options must be determined by end of April to allow impact assessment. Responses to online public consultation being evaluated now.

IPM: Crop specific guidelines to guide growers and make enforcement easier under consideration. MS say this is a region specific issue. Should these be mandatory? By MS/group of MS/regions within MS? Would MS approve guidelines developed by industry or draft guidelines?

Current data gap on IPM record keeping as not required in EU legislation. Could record keeping requirements be enhanced to help IPM enforcement?

Drones: Majority of MS favour drones. Stakeholders have a range of opinions. Current SUD did not envisage development of drone technology, so an update is needed. Current SUD should not inhibit digital agriculture, but the new SUD could encourage it.

Re. drones, a change is needed as drones can be used to reduce use and risk e.g. spot treatment. We don't have a clear picture – in some cases drones help to reduce use/risk, in other cases, there appears to be no benefit, e.g. large scale filed application. Option 1 – explicitly include drones under the aerial spraying prohibition or Option 2 – allow aerial spraying with controls, but not prohibited. SANTE F3 may attend next OECD WGs on drones. Possible Annex in new SUD to allow easier updating to reflect future technological changes.

Croplife: Future proofing new legislation is critical given the likely changes in the technology. Croplife favour option 2 – derogations give a negative message for a new technology which could help to reduce risk. Annex should be pragmatic and flexible to avoid the need for ongoing minor changes.

A decision tree tool could be applied to determine which cases drones could be used to apply PPPs. This would help in the communication around the safe use of drones.

Imaging technology to view fields/crops. Analysis of images to determine pest/weed infestation. Decide if/how to control the pest. Control the pest.

OECD subgroup on drones. COM, DE (JKI) and Switzerland from EU on the group. Focus on residues, operator exposure, drift and efficacy. WPP Recommendations by end of June 2021. Drone PAE technology has advanced considerable in the last 2 years. Industry sponsored task force to do research in this area. Task force will be based in the USA but will engage with stakeholders throughout the world.

: OECD work, while welcome, will not be in time for the revised SUD, but an Annex in the SUD could be updated to take OECD recommendations into account.

Digital label compliance. Croplife are promoting this concept, and foresee that it as a useful tool to record PPP use.

- Grower scans the PPP container
- Applies the PPP
- Record of use kept by GPS equipped sprayer/drone
- Resultant data helps the grower and could help CAs to control use as per label/IPM

- System could help avoid errors and data recording burden on growers
- Data could be used to show compliance
- Initial discussions with, and positive feedback from, Copa-cogeca and CEMA (machinery manufacturers)

: Positive reaction – electronic record keeping, reducing burden on growers, control of IPM – system could address many current problems in SUD/controlling IPM/PPP record keeping. To help reduce the burden under SAIO, COM are investigating extent of electronic PPP record keeping. This is more widely used in some MS than others.

: Would the system replace/complement/be integrated into existing crop management/electronic recording systems?

Croplife: They are now investigating a simpler system for some growers. Data would be owned by the grower. Its important that the grower cant manipulate the data to ensure its reliability. System links information on PPPs, machinery, farm management systems and regulators. COM support, specifically AGRI, linking to CAP funds, would help to promote rapid uptake. COM practical examples of data to be recorded would be useful in refining the system. What data/technology standards are applicable? How to make sure the system interfaces with other systems?

Initial positive feedback, but need to reflect with colleagues and revert with more considered feedback. Could data be easily transferred to CAs?