



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
 Directorate C. Strategy, simplification and Policy Analysis
 C.1. Policy perspectives

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NOTE FOR THE FILE

Subject: Report - Meeting between AGRI Cabinet and DG of the European Crop Protection Association - 30/3/2020

Participants:

- European Crop Protection Association (ECPA): [REDACTED]
- European Commission: C. Geslain-Laneelle (Deputy Head of Cabinet), J. Pinto Antunes (Member of Cabinet), [REDACTED]

Main issues:

- Chemical **pesticides reduction target** in the forthcoming Farm to Fork Strategy:
 - The crop protection industry is open to discuss any reduction targets. The industry has constantly been working to reduce the use of pesticides for several years. However, this objective must be realistic and based on science.
 - Science-based and innovative solutions should be at the heart of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy. In this regard, ECPA will soon announce its own “strategy” for the sustainable use of pesticides. It will show how much the industry is investing and will invest in bio-pesticides and digital agriculture to help farmers use less chemical pesticides.
 - The 50% reduction figure disclosed is not considered realistic by the crop protection industry. The development of bio-pesticides is promising, but these products cannot fully replace chemical pesticides. In addition, French experience shows how difficult it is to reach such a high target.
 - On the basis of projections concerning the products which will hit the market and those for which the authorisation will not be renewed between today and 2030, the crop protection industry considers that a reduction of

25% of the use of chemical pesticides, whatever the risk of their use, is achievable by 2030.

- Impact of the **Covid-19 pandemic** on the Farm to Fork Strategy:
 - C. Geslain-Laneelle reminds that the strategy marks the beginning of a longer process. It is an opportunity to give new impetus to more sustainable food systems, including production. However, the new context affected by the Covid-19 pandemic modifies the way in which the Commission approaches the communication around the strategy in terms of date of adoption but also of content (exit plan to the Covid-A19 crisis and recovery plan for the European economy).
 - This does not mean that ambition will be weakened, but that the recovery plan for the European economy must be taken into account. For example, maintaining productivity and the level of food production and not importing products outside the EU with less ambitious environmental standards remain essential in this context.
 - ECPA has noted that the issue of food security has returned to the top of the political agenda due to the coronavirus crisis and has indicated that the industry is ready to make the effort to provide, on time, to farmers the necessary phytosanitary products.
 - Concerning the regulatory calendar concerning the plant protection product authorisation process, ECPA indicates that several deadlines are put off due to COVID 19 (laboratory closure, national authorities unable to cope with the workload, etc.). ECPA has sent a letter on this subject to DG SANTE and offers to share it with the AGRI cabinet.

c.c.:

C. Geslain-Laneelle, J. Pinto Antunes, [REDACTED]
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