Unify criteria, the great challenge in phytosanitary registration

To unify criteria when addressing the phytosanitary product registration, for the benefit of society, is the great challenge in which representatives of all sectors involved in plant health in Spain (producers, exporters, technicians, manufacturers, distributors, and the Central and Regional Administration), during the closing day of the 14th Symposium of Plant Protection**, which has gathered in Seville around 1,200 professionals.**

José María Cobos, Deputy Director General of Vegetable and Forestry Health and Hygiene at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment (MAPAMA) explained the new Plant Protection Regulation, which replaces and repeals the Directive 2000/29 / EC, in addition to seven Pest Control Directives. *Its objective is to overcome the deficiencies raised in the previous EU phytosanitary regime and to implement a new strong, transparent and sustainable regulatory framework.*

It incorporates the new guidelines of the Treaty of Lisbon *and takes a step forward in the transparency*, since the pests must be justified technically by means of a Analysis of Risk, producing a list of all the plagues taken together in four categories. *In addition, it unifies the phytosanitary legislation integrating all the fields of application: agriculture, forestry, environment*

and landscape, which supposes an advance in the sustainability.

> The new Plant Health Regulations are designed to adapt quickly to new emerging risks and facilitate international trade by complying with International Phytosanitary Standards FAO-IPPC

Miguel Vela, Director of Quality at FEPEX, stated that "*the strong concentration of* exports of fresh Spanish fruit and vegetables *on Community markets shows that diversification is necessary, due to the increasing competition of EU countries and in the EU markets. This diversification is accompanied by significant barriers, notably those of the phytosanitary field, established in specific export protocols*, documents that include the organisms considered harmful by the importing country, and establish the control and inspection measures that that country requires. *This generates uncertainty among producers about the final access to the market, devaluation of the product in certain cases and makes it impossible to establish marketing campaigns aimed at consolidating a permanent presence in the market*, among other aspects".

José Luis Alonso Prados, Technical Director of the Evaluation of Varieties and Phytosanitary Products of INIA, presented the "New EU Regulatory Framework for the approval of active substances".

> The rapporteur of INIA stressed that the Community review program involves a drastic reduction in the availability of active substances in the European market

This reduction should be offset by new active substances, but that is not happening. He explained that Community legislation provides for the approval and authorization of plant protection products with very high levels of requirements in order to safeguard human, animal and environmental health. *This makes phytosanitary products which are authorized and marketed in the EU have passed a strict risk assessment to ensure that their use, following good phytosanitary practices, does not pose a risk to the environment.*

Round table as final brooch

In the round table "Registration of phytosanitary products in the EU, the new challenges", Carlos Palomar, Director General of AEPLA, warned that *in* Regulation 1107*, the current system is on the way to collapse due to lack of resources in the authorities in charge*, *the complexity of the system and the lack of trust between authorities*. He also pointed out that *Spain is an example of a dysfunctional system, which does not give the expected results, due to the different management of MAPAMA and the* Ministry of Health*, so that the creation of an independent Agency for the Registry becomes essential.*

> Carlos Palomar: "to sustain Spanish agriculture requires a robust, predictable and rigorous regulatory system that fosters innovation, comparing risks and benefits of phytosanitary technology"

Ricardo Serra, President of ASAJA Andalucia, explained that "farmers are taking our farms ahead in an increasingly restrictive environment, we face bans and sometimes meaningless rules, we adapt to the increasingly high demands of the market and we cope with increasing bureaucracy. *If we have the most scrupulous legislation, the best scientists and we have the most rigorous Food Safety Authority, let us leave it to the health of all Europeans, without external interference without scientific basis".*

Miguel Vela, Quality Director of FEPEX, *highlighted the need for a wide availability of phytosanitary products to combat pests and diseases in the* fruit and vegetable sector, based on the diversity of their supply, far superior to that of other competing countries, producers and breadth of production schedules. In its view, despite the fact that producers follow a preventive strategy, *the use of plant protection products is still necessary, especially in so-called smaller or specialized crops, which are often a gateway to the main European distribution chains.*

> In a globalized market, smaller or specialized crops can occur in other countries with greater availability of plant protection products

José Luis Alonso, Technical Director of INIA, has stated that "for the authorization and placing on the market of a plant protection product, it is necessary to demonstrate that its use does not represent a risk to human, animal or environmental health, which implies scientific evaluation of the use of the plant protection product. *The trend is aimed at limiting and decreasing the use of substances of concern.*

> José Luis Alonso: Member States should have multidisciplinary teams of evaluation technicians with sufficient training and experience to meet the requirements of European regulation

In this area, INIA since 1997 has been responding to the obligations of Spain as a rapporteur country for active substances and has been authorized by MAPAMA as an Independent Evaluation Body for active substances and phytosanitary products in 2015.

Ricardo Alarcón, Head of Plant Health Service of the Regional Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development (CAPDER) of the Regional Government of Andalusia has assured, in relation to the expectations of the new European Regulation, that "the Administration is confident

that the new framework Legal framework for EU plant health to be an effective tool to achieve the objectives for which it is designed: to prevent the entry of pests not present in Europe that could pose a risk to our crops, and if they appear to be able to have agile and effective to eradicate them".

> Alarcón: "The case of Xylella fastidiosa should make us all reflect on the importance of plant health, and in that all include farmers, nurseries, plant traders and plant products, which are a key element for the early detection of these problems"

He also stressed that the Administration should apply the standards established, comply with them and enforce them and always ensure the general interest of all actors in the agricultural world.

José María Cobos, Deputy Director General of MAPAMA, explained that "the farmer has different types of tools to handle the pests of his crop, and phytosanitary products are another tool, which must be authorized to ensure that their use is effective and poses no risk to health and the environment. *In the past, the complexity of the procedures led to the need for lengthy periods to authorize the registration of plant protection products, which affected the competitiveness of our agriculture, which lacked the necessary chemical tools and the best new products for fight diseases and pests".*

The table has been moderated by Antonio Vergel, President of the Official Association of Technical Engineers of Eastern Andalusia (COITAND), organizer of the event. Vergel stressed that the roundtable "has been carried out with the aim of enhancing the needs of agriculture, providing ideas, taking into account all sectors involved in plant health, that have to converge and plan to solve the current and future problems".

Source: COITAND

TAMBIÉN TE PUEDE INTERESAR:

?? Antonio Vergel: "Without phytosanitaries, agro-food production would be reduced by more than 50%"