



Food security and sustainability: it all starts with the B of Biocontrol

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IBMA, the voice of the biological control sector, is concerned about the Commission decision to delay the much-needed reform of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive. We underline that Food Security and Sustainability go hand in hand and now is the time for a legally binding 75% target for the use of Biocontrol.

IBMA Executive Director Jennifer Lewis: “Rapid reform is important to ensure that farmers are supported in their transition to biocontrol to complement the chemical use reduction targets. A 75% target for biocontrol is achievable by 2030 with the advocated policy changes in SUD and a significantly accelerated authorisation process.”

Furthermore, IBMA President Herman van Mellaert underlines: “ Biocontrol is essential to the EU Farm to Fork and Green Deal policy goals and delays in policy changes will harm food security and sustainability. This reform is a decisive step to transition to more agroecological farming.”

Agroecological transition is essential to protect ecosystems and biodiversity, and beneficial for farmers that directly depend on the long term productivity of their farms. The agricultural sector plays a crucial role in society, to build back resilience on farms for long term food security *and make our agriculture and food supply chains more resilient and sustainable to cope with future crises.* Biocontrol directly contributes to agriculture *working with nature* - without nature there will be no food security.

Biocontrol is a valuable solution to support agricultural production: by prioritising non-chemical methods, biodiversity will be regenerated, soil will become healthier, water cleaner and cropping systems more resilient and productive. Reform of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive must support farmers with all necessary tools to secure their production in a sustainable way.

A positive target for biocontrol will complement the reduction target for chemical plant protection products, stimulate the uptake of alternatives to chemical pesticides and help maintain adequate pest and disease control. To support Member States’ increased use of biocontrol, a legal definition of biocontrol is needed in the SUD reform. A definition will bring regulatory clarity and facilitate financial incentives for farmers.

A 75% target by 2030 for biocontrol use is the right level of ambition to underpin a timely transition towards agroecological farming, while reducing concerns over risks to food security.

IBMA strongly hopes that the Commission will shortly publish the SUD reform, with a 75% biocontrol use target to support farmers with plant protection and productivity goals, paving the way to a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system.

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